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UNDER THE GAZE: THE EXPERIENCES OF AFRICAN CANADIAN STUDENTS IN TWO EDMONTON HIGH SCHOOLS

BY

© JENNIFER ROSEMARIE SPENCER

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

IN

SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

Edmonton, Alberta

SPRING 1995

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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled **UNDER THE GAZE: THE EXPERIENCES OF AFRICAN CANADIAN STUDENTS IN TWO EDMONTON HIGH SCHOOLS** submitted by JENNIFER ROSEMARIE SPENCER in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF EDUCATION in SOCIOLOGY of EDUCATION.

Swee-Hin Toh
(Supervisor)

Ann Marie Decore

Terry Carson

Date: 14th April 1995

This Thesis is Dedicated to My Mother:

Phyllis Constance Kelly

who gave me the space to grow into who I am today, and instilled in me the importance of an education for women.

ABSTRACT

This study, based on research conducted in two Canadian high schools, examines the experiences of African Canadian school students. It discusses how these students gain knowledge about themselves, form their identities, and interact with dominant White society's view of African Canadians. The study explores the interrelationship of popular culture with the students' formation and knowledge of these gendered identities. The research not only outlines the students' perceptions of peers, teachers, and the curriculum, but also critically evaluates these school experiences.

The literature indicates that the school experiences of Black students in other Canadian cities and other liberal democracies is racialized.

This study responds to the colour-blind attitude of educators who view African Canadian students as experiencing school in the same way as their peers by arguing that racial identity does make a difference.

Students generally are seen as a captive audience, and treated as such. This research data, collected primarily through ethnographic interviews with the students, was a way of allowing the "captive audience" to speak for themselves.

Data analysis was thematic, with an emphasis on narrative in its reporting. The findings were foregrounded against those found in Britain, Canada and the United States.

The discussions with the students revealed that the students lives' outside of school affect their perception of schooling experiences.

The conclusion of this study is that marginalization of the students' experiences occurs when the paradigm adopted by the education system is one that attempts to erase differences by ignoring their existence. Recommendations are also made for curriculum and policy changes.

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TERMINOLOGIES

Race is used as a social not a biological construct throughout this thesis. Nonetheless, social categorization takes place on the basis of physical characteristics (McCarthy & Crichlow, 1993, Solomos, 1986).

Racism implies "any type of exploitation, oppression, or exclusion that is directed at those who are deemed racially or culturally different.... Those in positions of power are able to invoke a doctrine of superiority to ensure domination over those who are perceived as different and inferior." (Elliott & Fleras, 1992, p. 55)

Ethnicity implies categorization based on symbols, pertaining to birthright, homeland, language, culture and heritage.

Slang

"chug" ... derogatory term used to describe First Nations student.

"diss" ... show disrespect.

"down" ... good with you.

"facety"... rude.

"fly" ... nothing can touch him or her -- the greatest.

"wicked"... enjoyable, good fun.

"wigger"... White person who dresses in a perceived Black style and associates with Black students.

Abbreviations in Interview Extracts

M.A. = Malcolm Anzania.

J.S. = Jennifer Spencer.

All the names of the students and staff who participated in this research have been changed in order to maintain their anonymity.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH TOPIC

> "Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced."
> (James Baldwin, cited in Philip 1993, p.229)

The Problem

Does ethnicity/race affect the way that students experience their schooling?

Canadian society subscribes to a liberal philosophy which advocates that treating everyone the same is being fair and equal. Adoption of this philosophy leads many educators and other members of society to believe that ignoring the race/ethnicity of a student leads to equal treatment. Many educators come to believe that by adopting a colour-blind attitude, they are ensuring that race/ethnicity does not affect the way in which students receive and perceive their schooling. Additionally, using the neighbouring United States as a comparison, the race/ethnic relations in Canadian society are often interpreted as being superior, with race/ethnicity having little effect on the experiences of students. But is this philosophy and comparison supported by the experience of Black school students?

Conception

The impetus for carrying out the research was my immigration to Canada from England in 1990. In England race as a construct is recognized as a source of potential social conflict by sociologists and politicians (Hall 1993; Jeater 1993; Gilroy 1980). However, the rhetoric of Canadian society is centered much more on consensual social relations. I questioned this social consensus, with the "eye" of an outsider, and as a Black woman. Could a society with similar roots and values to other Western democracies be so different in how it regarded those who are visibly different? Having been a teacher for a number of years I doubted that the education system, as a major institution within society, could be totally divorced from the values and racial attitudes of the rest of society. I realized early in my research that Canada's strong provincial emphasis meant that though education systems within the provinces bore some similarities, they are also very disparate. In Canada's past, many differing racial and ethnic phenomena were often a reflection of patterns of immigration and settlement, as well as how the general policy of multiculturalism and the Human Rights Act were interpreted (Tator & Henry 1991).

I decided that my review of the literature should include a historical analysis, because in some ways "people are trapped in history, and history is trapped in them" (James Baldwin, cited in Nourbese Philip, 1992, p. 229). It was therefore important that I get an overview of how Canadian society has historically treated its citizens who are visibly different. What I discovered was that though there is a veneer of tolerance, generally Canadian history reflects a degree of institutional animosity towards those who were visibly, linguistically, and culturally different from the dominant Anglo/French groups (Granatstein et al., 1986).

What the historical enquiry enabled me to do was to develop the premise that since racism exists in Canadian society, as indicated by its history and present day realities, then the school as an institution within the wider society will probably exhibit aspects of racialization[1] (Miles, 1988). Backing this premise was literature which indicated that in other present-day Western societies education has played a role in sorting and evaluating children of African descent into society's economic hierarchy (Tomlinson, 1989; Hatcher, 1987). This sorting seems to have occured via credentialism and the streaming processes, as well as daily interaction between teacher and pupil (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968; Winfield, 1985). Therefore if Black students are unable to obtain sufficient high school credits then it can be surmised that their transfer to higher education will be problematic, and if they enter the workforce directly it will be at a lower economic level. In Toronto, Ontario Black youth high school drop out rate and consequent unemployment has been recorded at higher levels than their non-Black peers (Solomon, 1993). Yet even qualifications do not automatically lead to economic prosperity for Blacks in a dominant White society. Bolari & Li, 1985 using Census Canada statistics note that though over 65 percent of West Indian Blacks had either a university degree, a trade certificate, or a diploma, only 3-4 percent earned over $32,000 annually in 1981.

The initial research question I had set myself was problematic, sensitive and complex. Discussions with fellow students indicated that finding out if high school students were experiencing racism within school would be a problem, since it would be difficult to gain access to classrooms for the necessary observations of teacher pupil interaction. It would also be difficult for me to monitor teacher behaviour to ascertain the subtle expressions of racism, since those teachers who would be willing to let me into their classrooms would put probably on a "performance" for me (Goffman, 1959). Or that these would include teachers sensitive to differences and trying to be non-racist.

Terminology

Terminology also proved to be a problem in the conception of my research question. I suggest that "the reason we can't use these terms neatly is because each of them is a struggle over their meaning" (Young, 1987, p. 219). I was constantly questioned as to what I meant by "Black" students and this continued to be a query for others throughout the stages of my research. For teachers, and fellow students the very fact of highlighting the "Black" population seemed controversial, as they indicated, "There are not many in Edmonton are there?" My counter to this argument was that it would be interesting to study the perceptions of the Black students now and then study their perceptions at a later period in time, when the size of the Black student population has increased. The response of students and teachers to my research area, perhaps reflects the narrow confines of research usually associated with Blacks, namely that as a group we are only worthy of research if we present a problem to the dominant White society.

With the post-modern and post-structuralist literature abounding, I encountered theoretical questioning of the concept of identity, and whether the construct of "Black students" was built upon the notion of there being a restrictive Black "essence" (hooks, 1992; Bhabha, 1990) since the group I wanted to investigate had a variety of lifestyles and perspectives. How could a research question focus on one specific dimension related to physiology? My rationale for adopting the terminology was that Black is a social construct as is White, and as such there is a social essence as Miles and Phizacklea argue "it is the unique experience of blacks of racial exclusion that is the essence of Black ethnicity" (1977, p. 495). Focusing on the perceptions of a specific group of Black students, enabled me to partly answer the question of how the students' race and ethnicity impact on their schooling. As a social construct, racialization of the lives of Black students should emerge in their interpretations and the meanings that they give to their everyday school experiences and life. I feel that there are structural experiences of oppression that give the Black community a commonality across gender, and geographic location. "Concrete social relations and mechanisms of social ascription mean that certain people end up sharing, or being locked into, an unequal situation, or are incorporated into the society in a subordinated location" (Figueroa, 1993, p. 23).

I initially settled on calling the group of students I interviewed "students of African descent" which meant that my research would encompass those who might have recently immigrated to Canada, from the Caribbean or Africa as well those who were born here. My hope was that this mixed grouping would provide "rich" data, that might elicit whether those who emigrate here have a different perception of how their school lives are mediated by their race. Throughout my analysis I have used the term Black since that was the descriptor adopted by the students.

Problem Statement Summation

I decided that my research should be exploratory, primarily trying to ascertain how Black students perceive their school lives, and how the construction of race/ethnicity operates in the school environment. Of additional benefit, the research would indicate paths worth pursuing in the future, as well as being proactive rather than reactive to the needs of Black students. It was from this basis of analysis that I decided my condensed research question would be to ascertain the perceptions, meanings, and interpretations pupils of African descent impute to their school experiences.

Focus Questions: I devised a set of **subsidiary operational research questions** based on the literature review, informal interviews, and my knowledge from classroom teaching:

1. How do pupils of African descent perceive themselves in relation to their fellow pupils?
2. How do pupils of African descent perceive their relationship with teachers?
3. How do pupils of African descent perceive their school curriculum in relation to their ethnic identity?
4. How do pupils of African descent view their educational future?
5. What implications can be drawn for school policies, organization and practices from the findings of my research?

CANADIAN SOCIAL CONTEXT - articulation of race and ethnicity

My research though focused on two high schools in Edmonton, nonetheless needs to be related to the wider Canadian social context and environment within which these young people experience their lives. So we start with an overview of Canadian society and how the construction of race and ethnicity as social categories has taken place.

Within Canadian society race/ethnicity and culture affects how one experiences life (Bolari & Li 1985). These social constructs are mediated and filtered by factors such as socio-economic background, language, and gender, all of which contribute towards differing experiences. As an example young Black males are more likely than young Black females to be apprehended by police officers in some areas of Toronto (Elliott & Fleras 1992, p. 251; 308).

Canadian society is often viewed as being supportive of pluralism. By pluralism I mean recognizing and indeed being committed to, the right of others - individual and groups - to be different (Figueroa, p. 27). Though there is a "de jure" acceptance, via the Human Rights Act (1978) and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, of people who are visibly different, the "de facto" reality, of Canadian society is one that betrays a present and past of inter-ethnic tensions and racism. Stanley R. Barret (1987) crystallizes this position with his statement that:

> [R]acism in Canada has been institutionalized...racism in this country is as deeply rooted as that in the United States... it remains puzzling how Canadians have been able to maintain a reputation for tolerance and harmony. What has characterized Canada has been an ostrich-like denial that a significant problem of racial hostility exists at all (cited in Philip 1992, p. 199).

Starting historically with the First Nations people, and moving to other non-European groups, we find racism in Canadian institutions as well as state legislations (Philip, 1982, p. 182). An example of the latter was the Immigration Act which up until 1962 kept Canadian immigration policy tied to the maintenance of a society based on a White European majority. The revisions of the Immigration Act that finally took place in 1962 and again in 1967, were prompted not by any major desire to develop a pluralist society, but rather one that was based upon economic expediency, as the Government realized that Canada would not be able to rely on its traditional source for skilled immigrants - namely Europe.

Pluralism

Historically, pluralism was never seen as a viable option for Canada, nor was it seen as the role of the school to promote such a concept. In reality, the views of the ruling Anglo elite was that of cultural assimilation, which was to be achieved by the schooling system. As J. S. Woodsworth the labour leader noted in 1905, "If Canada is to become in any real sense a nation, if our people are to become one people, we must have one language... The public school is the most important factor in transforming the foreigners into Canadians." (cited in Granatstein et al., 1986, p. 251). The rationale for Canadianization was clarified by John W. Defoe, influential editor of Winnipeg's Free Press, in his statement that "We must Canadianize this generation of foreign-born settlers...or this will cease to be a Canadian country in any real sense of the term" (cited in Granatstein, p. 251). It is worth noting that assimilation did not extend to racial assimilation, and any non-White immigrants were regarded as a potential threat to the purity of the Anglo race. As an Attorney General of B.C. explained, "the real objection to the Oriental and the one that is permanent and incurable is the ethnological differences as between the White and Oriental races...In the Devine arrangement of things it was [not] intended that the blood of the Oriental and the blood of the White should mix" (cited in Granatstein et al., p. 266).

Though couched in different terminologies, in many ways these arguments are reflective of the debates presently going on in Alberta and the rest of Canada, as to who is a Canadian. Issues such as the wearing of turbans in legion halls or the wearing of braids by First Nations police officers are examples of how dominant groups attempt to make other groups assimilate to their concept of what it means to be a Canadian.

This perceived conflict between maintaining a visible cultural identity and the ability to subscribe to a national identity is exploited not only by the present day Reform Party, but is also a source of societal conflict in many multiracial liberal democracies (Hall, 1990; hooks, 1992; Giroux, 1993). Hall, in discussing developments around race and nationality in Britain, indicates that the issue of ethnic identity has now become linked to the issue of nationality and culture. As Diane Jeater attests, "a new racism...replaced a crude obsession with pigmentation with a much more subtle argument based on culture" (1993, p. 112). To be a true national requires that one subsumes one's identity within a framework frequently dictated by a dominant group. This dominant group often has power in some form which enables them to influence public opinion. This power does not necessarily rest within the economic sphere as in classic Marxian analysis - it can also rest within ideas, ideas that have a hegemonic 'common sense' appeal to others (Gramsci, 1971, p. 12). Hence within Canada the conflicting perspectives about "hyphenated Canadians" as exemplified by the reception of the recent book by Neil Bissoondath (1994) are symbolic of a deeper conflict about ethnic identity within society. It is interesting to see the parallels between the romantic constructions of "Englishness" used to exclude and attack the Black presence in England and the romantic construction of "Canadian" taking place in Canada in order to support marginalization of non-White groups. As Omni and Winant (1993) indicate, "it is now possible to perpetuate racial domination without explicit reference to race. Subtextual or coded racial signifiers or the mere denial of the continuing significance of race may suffice. We have reached that point where colonial subjects now defined as "immigrants" [are seen to] challenge the majoriterian status of the formerly metropolitan group.

The discussions of the conflict between culture, identity and nationalism are a reflection of the tension which exists between the liberal ideology of equality, which advocates that everyone is treated the same and the reality that differences exist in society and that equality might not necessarily mean that every one is treated the same (Bhabha, 1990). Gordon

(1981) sees a similar dilemma in the United States, namely a clash of values, whereby `...proponents of both sides can claim in good faith to derive their respective positions from standard moral and religious systems, one side emphasizing principle of equal treatment and individual meritocracy, the other principles that call upon group compensation for undeniable past injustices' (Gordon, 1981, p. 181). Gordon refers to these values as individual pluralism and corporate pluralism, he suggests that the former emphasizes individual rights, the pursuit of which is not to be affected. It does not stipulate segregation, but neither does it formally promote integration. The latter formally recognizes racial and ethic entities `...patterns of political power and economic reward are based on distributive formula which postulates group rights and which defines group membership as an important factor in the outcome for individuals' (Gordon, 1981, p. 183).

In Canada there has been a furore over the enactment of employment equity laws. Many White male Canadians have adopted a binary view of equity, as denial of one group. Theorist such as Yinger present an alternative perspective and critique based on experience in the United Sates namely that "the current call for `colour blindness' the opposition to affirmative action, and the claim that all that is needed is equal individual access to opportunity seem to me to support not democratic pluralism but the perpetuation of present unequal status structures" (Yinger, p. 33).

The reality of employment equity in the private sector is that figures released by Employment and Immigration Canada 1991 revealed that the wage gap between visible minorities and other employees has grown over five years (Globe & Mail December 30, 1992). The latter fits in with Giroux's analysis of the U.S. whereby he suggests that as part of the hegemonic project a politics of representation portrays Whites as the victims of racial inequality (1993, p. 10). He highlights the use of terms such as quotas, busing, welfare and multiculturalism as signifiers to raise the insecurities and anger of Whites. Within Canadian society the signifiers revolve around terms such as multiculturalism, and immigration.

As part of the hegemonic construction of "Canadian" many White Canadians think of Canadians of African descent as recent immigrants. In fact people of African descent have had a significant presence in Canada since 1783 and the days of the Empire Loyalist, when many of these Black loyalists settled in Nova Scotia. The province therefore became home to the most historically persistent Black settlement, with the separate community of Africville, socially isolated from White society, developing within the boundaries of the town of Halifax. "Separated from the rest of the city by bush and rock, Africville had its own church and school and by the twentieth century was home to several hundred African Canadians" (Finkle et al., p. 120). In 1961, Nova Scotia was home to 30% of Canada's Black population.

Focusing more specifically on Alberta's early history of immigration we find inter-ethnic tensions exemplified by such episodes as attacks on the Chinese in Calgary in 1892 the banning of Ukrainian languages in 1918. Investigations of early 20th century newspapers and government documents reveals that as early as 1899 the Immigration Branch was replying negatively to the suggestion of placing Blacks on the prairies, and informed its agent in Kansas City that, "...it is not desired that any negro immigrants should arrive in Western Canada or that such immigration should be promoted by our agents." (Shepard 1976, p.94).

In Alberta, the most enduring historical settlement of people of African descent were those who settled in Amber Valley just north of Athabasca. A farming area; many of the Blacks were able to survive as distinct from the White society that surrounded them. By noting the long presence of Blacks in Canadian society, and their segregated lives, we can see the existence of racism. This presence also highlights the question of why is it denied and Blacks are seen only as recent immigrants, and pioneers are all White? If pluralism exists uniformly within Canadian society then why is more account not taken of how early Black and other non-White settlers organized their lives?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Deciding on a methodology which was capable of tapping the perception of the pupils yet was manageable within the confines of the time period was difficult. I felt that questionnaires alone would be limiting in that I would not tap the perceptions of the pupils. Questionnaires might allow me to come up with numerical indices, but that would not give me access to the underlying nuances of how students related to their world. Classroom observation would have to be over a long period of time which for me would be beyond the temporal and financial remit of a masters thesis. It is also better suited to "the study of roles and organization" (Morgan, 1988, p. 19). I therefore settled on the use of **focus group** as the primary method of my research. Though well known in the area of market research, this method was first pioneered by Robert Merton, the sociologist and his collaborators, who used focus groups to examine the persuasiveness of war time propaganda efforts. (Merton & Kendall, 1946; Merton et al., 1956; Merton, 1987). Perhaps as an effect of boundary maintenance within disciplines Merton et al. made little mention of focus group methodology that they used to elicit their findings. As part of the split in discipline "work with groups had become identified with psychology, and qualitative research became associated with participant observation and interviewing" (Morgan, p.11).

The advantage of a focus group method, is that it is qualitative, is adaptable to presentation in a narrative form, and therefore enables me to reveal the attitudes and cognition of students. As such, focus groups offer the possibility of "the explicit use of the group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in groups (Morgan, p. 12). I also felt that since race is a social construct that is ascribed to a group of people, it would be interesting to collect part of my data on a group basis. I felt that focus groups would enable me to hear how participants respond to each other thus giving an insight not just to their natural vocabulary on a topic, but also when they are willing to challenge others, and how they respond to such challenges (Morgan, p. 18; Levy, 1979).

The importance of gaining the perceptions of African-Canadians can be seen in Cooley's remark that "if men define social situations as real, they are real in their consequences." Linking this to race specifically we can postulate that each actor's and more importantly each group's definition of the situation and each group's racist frame of reference - which shapes that definition - inform social action and thereby social reality (cited in Figueroa 1993, p. 23). Further, though schools exist as institutions with overt aims and objectives, not every group within that school experiences it in the same way (Willis, 1977; Anyon, 1981; Ogbu, 1992). This is the case for students as well as for teachers, as attested to by research on the hidden curriculum (Jackson, 1968; LeCompte, 1978). Often investigations of this aspect of school life reveal the subtle ways that schools as institutions bring about certain outcomes, as a result of the roles that pupils adopt (Willis, 1977). The relationship between race and perceptions as outlined in interactionism is that the meanings, attitudes, outlooks and predispositions that people bring to bear on the situations they encounter as well as the situations themselves, have a history, that is to say, they are the outcome of a `historical run of experience' (Mead, 1934a; Blumer & Dusteer, 1980). One can suggest that since race is present in mainstream society, most students have a historical run of racial experiences, even if that history is one indicated by an absence of interaction with non-Whites or vice-a-versa (Frankenberg, 1993).

By questioning groups of high school pupils in Edmonton about their perception of schooling, peers, teachers and the curriculum we can hopefully gain insight into their school lives. Do similar patterns emerge to those indicated by the literature on inter-racial and inter-ethnic relations in other cities and societies? It is worth pointing out that though the overall aim of my research was a sort of Weberian "verstehen" I also wanted it to be critically ethnographic, or as Lather states "a place where reality is held to be something more than negotiated accounts (1986, p. 71). I therefore attempt to use a critical perspective, whereby I not only highlight participants view of "reality", but also where these views come from and the social consequences of them (Lather, p. 70).

Before finalizing my focus questions I spent 4 months talking to individuals who were interested in my area of research. Since I was unfamiliar with the demographic area within which I would carry out my research, I used the "snowballing" approach (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 66), whereby one person recommended another person who might be interested in talking unofficially to me and giving their insights. These individuals came from different fields of work ranging from education to community work. Their insights were integrated with the perspectives I had gained from reading journal articles, books, watching films, and attending day schools for my literature review. I also started to keep a reflective journal at this time, recording interesting insights from my unofficial interviews (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 86), or pertinent observations which gave me an inkling of how race as a form of representation operates in society. During this period of initial enquiry, I started to look for schools which might be suitable sites to carry out my research.

Research Ethics

Drawing up my ethics review form required that I integrate procedures to protect the anonymity of my participants. As well I had to ensure that they felt able to withdraw anytime they so wished. I was aware that the students were in a position of subordination, within the school system, and as such may be vulnerable to reprisals from teachers if they were too critical of individual teachers or the school. The teachers could also be viewed in a similar position of risk, if they criticized their colleagues or the administration. Anonymity was maintained by using substitute names for anyone interviewed in the research, and consequently quoted in my analysis. Other than my fellow moderator, I allowed no one to listen to the tape recordings.

It was necessary to obtain approval of the school board. However, when the proposal reached this stage an administrator requested that I attend a meeting in person in order to "put my side of the story." I found this request revealing and reflective of the sensitivity with which the issue of race is regarded, as well as an indication of the liberal paradigm that equates equal treatment with equal outcome. I have included an extract from my reflective journal to illustrate this process:

> **February 25th 1994**
> Met with A and B who are in the Student Services department. "A" suggested that I explain myself. Seemed slightly antagonistic towards me. He said the nature of my research was sensitive, especially in light of the beating which had taken place at one of the High schools that I wanted to carry out my research at. He stated that they did not keep records of pupils ethnic origins, since ethnicity was not seen as of primary significance. I asked him if he was indicating that all pupils had the same schooling experiences and that their ethnicity had no impact. He seemed concerned about the media getting hold of my research and stated that I could not identify the school or the district in my written work (indicates how the media plays a role in our construction of race as a category). He asked me how I was going to identify the pupils since parents might object to me labelling their children as being from a particular ethnic group. I pointed out that I had contacts in the school, and friends who knew pupils who attended the schools in question so that I would have a pool of students from which to build. I mentioned that a teacher at one of the potential high schools for my research was very interested in me carrying out the research. This seem to mellow him some what!... He went to great lengths to explain that I was not being singled out because I had been requested to explain in person the rationale and the reason for my research. He mentioned how researchers found it advantageous to use school boards to gain access to students as they were in a sense a "captive audience." I indicated to him that his comment was one of the reasons that I felt that my research was appropriate. All too often students are treated as a captive audience and as captives not given recognition that they may have a perspective on their social situation. As an aside he said that he thought that the schools that I had chosen were apt for my research and that I should get some good information. He also stated that the school board would want to get a copy of my thesis. It's worth noting that the ground work I had put in during the September to December 1993 period had paid off, in that being able to establish that I had contacts in the school was important in allowing me to gain further access. (extract from journal)

Eventually I was given permission to contact the 2 schools that I had selected for research. Though both administrators could have vetoed my research proposal, especially one school which had experienced some negative incidents with some of the students that I wanted to interview, both of them were welcoming and helpful.

Interview Protocol

I choose students as the protocol and interviewed them in the school, or the local Mall for those who were banned from school premises. I attended outside school events in which the students were involved. These included a court hearing for one of my interviewees, as well as a general "rap" session for Black youths organized by a local Black youth organization. These events in conjunction with general observations made around the schools enabled me to get an additional dimension as to how my participants interacted outside the school environment.

For my **research site** I selected school A and school B as a result of observations which revealed them as having significant numbers of African Canadian students. No records are kept of students' racial origins, guesstimates ranged from fifty to one hundred in school populations of about a thousand.

School A is seen by many within the educational community as a school with a strong academic tradition. Its reputation is based mainly on the academic programs it offers, and a reputation for many of its students going on to University and other higher education institutions.

School B is seen as offering fewer academic programs and situated in an area that has more single dwellings and a higher level of socio-economic problems. Though many of its students went on to post secondary institutions, its past reputation was as a school which had a vocational focus. A teacher who had worked at both schools later compared them :

> [In school A] 2/3rd of the students were serious students who had their life together and going forward. 1/3 were unmotivated and struggling....[In school B] 2/3 were struggling, and 1/3 were as good as any student at school A.... At school A more Black students had a broader experience [whereas in school B] welfare was more of a lifestyle....[Basically] a school is academic because of the children who go there. (teacher)

Another teacher who had also worked at both, again reiterated the differences.

> [School A doesn't have the vocational program that [school B] does.... We have a real gamut of high academic achievers and then we have low academic achievers. [School A] was all the same. You couldn't take shop at [school A]....

The Research Population

I interviewed a total of 49 students in both high schools; consisting of 26 females and 23 males. The majority of the students were in grades 11 and 12, and ranged in age from 15 to 20 years. Most of the students were born in Canada, but a significant majority had parents who were born in the Caribbean. A few of the students had emigrated to Canada during their junior high school career.

Two **gender based** focus groups were used in each of the two schools mainly as a result of feminist and post-structuralist theorising that minority women and girls have radically different experiences of racial inequality than do their male counterparts (McCarthy & Crichlow 1993, p. xix). Malcolm a fellow education student at the university assisted me as moderator for the male focus groups. I decided to have a match in gender for the focus group moderator, because I hoped it would be advantageous in establishing a rapport with the students. Research findings have indicted that the gender of the interviewer may well affect the interaction and statements made in the group. As Labov (1973) indicated, "the social situation is the most powerful determinant of verbal behaviour" (p. 33). I chose Malcolm, because he was familiar with aspects of Black youth culture, had an understanding of the argot that they might use, was politically aware, and was used to interviewing in his role as a radio host. In preparation for the interviewing, I gave him articles to read and also talked about the questioning route that would form the basis of the focus interviews. We also agreed that I would sit within his eye range during the interviews so that if I wanted him to shift his line of questioning or probe an issue I could indicate without necessarily interrupting the flow of the group.

Gaining access to the participants in the two schools involved different methods, but had the commonality of participant self-selection. In school A the Principal introduced me to a student who had contacts with a predominantly Black dance team in the school. He then gathered other students who might be interested in the research for an orientation meeting. About 20 students attended the meeting, during which I introduced myself and Malcolm and outlined the research process. It should be pointed out that one of the participants knew Malcolm, and this was borne in mind during the analysis stage of the research. The participants were generally receptive to the focus of the research, but wanted to know what sort of questions I would be asking them. Once an indication was given of my questioning route, the students launched naturally into a discussion about the curriculum. At the end of the orientation session, I gave out consent forms for them to sign, and also a questionnaire to complete. The questionnaire is based on one constructed by Thakur (1988), for his research into schooling and its cultural implications among visible minorities. The questionnaire elicited demographic information as well as information on student preferences in music, sports, and television. At the end of the session I indicated where and when we would be meeting next time and also explained to them that they would be meeting in gender specific groups. Often the literature suggests that mixed gender groups are dominated by males. However, analysis of data from the orientation session reveals the females spoke more often than the males. This may have been due to the numerical dominance of the females in the group, but after the first session, one of the male participants stated that this reticence was because they did not like to speak in front of certain females.

In school B the procedure for gaining access to participants was different. I had contacted a teacher at the school prior to the formal start of the interview procedure. The teacher acted as a go-between with the students and had informed the students that Malcolm and I would be coming to the school and that we were interested in speaking to the Black students over lunch time. About 30 students turned, up more males than in school A. The teacher indicated that it may well have been the availability of "patties" which had drawn them, but since a large number of them later signed up to take part in the research I think many were genuinely curious and interested in what we were trying to do. My **journal extract** highlights the procedure:

> **Tuesday April 12th**
> Went to school B for the orientation session. My link teacher has arranged a lunch of patties and drinks for them. She thinks that the lunch will provide an incentive to come. Malcolm and I arrive on time, and set up the room and arrange the consent forms, and paper for them to sign their names, grade and contact telephone numbers....At the start of the session there are about 35 students in the room mainly from grades 11 and 12. Many more males than from school A. Link teacher introduces us. We introduce ourselves, and then give a brief overview of the project. Decide to give out the lunch, I ask for volunteers to help with distribution, which results in the females volunteering. I suggest to the males not to just leave it to the females. This was met with much laughter by some of the males. Eventually, One young male came forward to help, along with some teasing by a few males. Thanked him, but should have given more public acknowledgment.
> During the explanation of the methodology of the project, some of the young males chatter. Malcolm points out that we want respect to be shown to other participants when the group gets underway. If anyone is speaking then others in the group are expected to listen. This seems to have some impact on the group. Some students have

> questions about the research such as of what consequence will the findings be? and also since prejudice exist outside the school how can our research affect this?... Tied into this Malcolm makes the point that for us as Black people we have to take the initiative to bring about changes in our lives, we can't just wait for others to change their attitude towards us. One female related an incident in her class, whereby she had being accused by another pupil of "ruining her [the other student's] culture". This caused a little bit of discussion among the students, as to the reasons for these views and the commonality of the experience.
>
> I mention to the students that the groups will be gender specific, and that research suggest that females experience schooling differently to males. One of the males verbally agrees, though he can't state specifically why.... Obviously, there are more students at the orientation than I need for my focus group, so I inform them that they can volunteer for either the relevant gender specific group, or to be interviewed individually. I feel that it is important the potential participants feel that their interest shown is appreciated, and that I keep my potential source of participants flexible... give consent forms to those who have decided to take part... and outline my ethics procedure, and the fact that they can withdraw from the research at anytime they so wish. At the end of the session I have 10 for each of my focus group, and 5 students who would like to be interviewed individually. I feel its perhaps better to have a larger focus group than intended because not all the students might be able to attend every session.
> The link teacher...agrees to contact the students when we have finalized times and room details.
> We have a debriefing with the link teacher, and settle details about rooms, recording equipment and which pupils will form the basis of our groups. It is interesting how the presence of a teacher who is interested in the results of the research can make the whole process of gaining access to the students different. The teacher is so enthusiastic about the research that I begin to question if I can do justice to the data collected from the pupils! We shall see. (extract from journal)

As indicated above, I had an orientation session in order to gain access to both group of students, however in school A, some potential participants sought me out. After the second female focus group, I was approached by a group of four girls who wanted to know why I had not invited them to be interviewed. One of them dramatically rolled up her sleeve and said "Aren't I Black enough! I complied with her wish to take part, and indicated that I would interview her and her friends on an individual basis. The latter incident illustrates the degree of interest shown by the students who volunteered for the research. They wanted their voices to be heard.

Interviews

From the end of March 1994 until the end of June I conducted three focus group interviews with each gender based group in the two schools, 19 individual student interviews and 13 teacher interviews. My primary method was student focus groups, but I also used individual interviews of students and teachers as a form of triangulation. As with the students, I issued letters to the teachers, outlining the purpose of my research, and requesting their help. The response rate was low, and I found that I had to follow up most letters with reminder calls. I interviewed the teachers mainly on school premises, except for one teacher who I interviewed at home. I also interviewed most of the students on school premises, or where they were no longer allowed on school premises, at the local mall.

The interview schedules varied between school A and school B. In school A I interviewed the students in regular classrooms mainly at lunch time, because some of the students had part-time jobs after school, for about 45 minutes to an hour. This schedule and location was problematic because we had to rush and finish early so a classrooms could be used straight after the lunch break. For one session, I interviewed a group at the end of a lesson and into the lunch period, which was much more satisfactory in that we were able to pursue our focus topic in greater depth. This factor of inadequate time and its effect on the group dynamics was noted by the students in school A:

> A lot of the time we'd be talking and you'd get cut off and we'd have to go [because the session had to end]. Then you'd forget something you were going to say. (focus group school A)

In school B most of the focus groups were held at the end of lessons and into lunch periods. This format along with a location that was not used as a classroom yielded more manageable focus groups because we were able to talk for longer periods of time without sudden interruption. Poor location also affected the quality of individual interviews in the mall. These were not as satisfactory as those held in classrooms, mainly because of noise in the background, people walking about, and distractions from peers. The location did however allow me to see the groups of male friends interacting out of school.

Though literature on focus groups indicated that getting young people to focus for a long period of time might be problematic, in fact, in the majority of the focus groups I had to bring the group interviews to a close because of time constraints. This willingness to talk may be because these groups of students, found discussion, a better way of expressing themselves than writing, which is often the "modus operandi" in classrooms (as an aside, one of the students indicated that he couldn't see why we cut down trees to make paper for exams when students could just as easily be tested verbally!). Their enthusiasm may also indicate the importance of the topics discussed. For the focus groups I devised a focus route of questioning that started from a general question and then moved to the specific, and the sensitive (Krueger, 1988). Open-ended questions were used in both the focus group and the individual interviews in that they are "important when you want to determine the salience or importance of opinions to people, since people tend to mention those matters that are most important to them " (Plays, p. 173).

As most students were willing, I **tape-recorded** interviews so that I caught all the comments and statements made by the participants. As Goode (1972) indicates "the tape recorded interview is a liberating influence on the interviewer because it permits him/ [her] to devote full attention to the respondent" (p. 253). Initially as a back-up to the tape I would also make notes, especially in the male focus sessions where I took the role of an observer. However, I found that for me to develop a rapport with the students, to follow and interpret their comments, and develop probes, I often had to forego simultaneous note-taking. This latter comment fits in with Krueger's statement that the moderator:

> needs to think in three dimensions as they observe the discussion:
> 1) the present - what is happening at this moment;
> 2) the next step - thinking ahead of the participants and always having a mental picture of what will occur next; and
> 3) the meaning of the information provided by the focus group - Are the topics being discussed addressing the critical areas needed in the study? and How will this information be used (1988, p. 158).

Data Analysis

As stated above, I tape recorded all the interviews. While this method ensured that I was getting access to the emic categories of the students, it also meant that I amassed a large number of transcripts because I transcribed all my audio tapes. Though transcribing proved time-consuming, I found the constant repetition of the tapes as I attempted to catch participants comments, gave me a greater familiarity with the data, which proved useful when looking for themes and patterns as well as illustrative quotes for my thesis. Since my research question was broad, and in an area that required exploratory research I saw my research as part of an explicatory process which was more inductive than deductive. The implication of the latter was that my conceptual framework and my questioning route, which was devised from it, was tentative and had to be flexible enough to allow it to respond to the perceptions of the specific groups of students I was interviewing.

Thematic **analysis** in a qualitative mode was used to analyze the data. I trawled the data, for commonalties in the students statements, or issues of importance they brought up for discussion. Particular significance was given to issues if they arose in both schools. As I collected the data, I attempted to provisionally analyze it after each focus group in order to ascertain which areas I should focus my questions. At times this proved difficult to do in detail, since transcribing each tape daily proved problematic (Bertrand et al., p. 201). What I settled for, was to listen several times to my tapes and then come up with some indicators for probes in the focus group or issues to pursue in the individual interviews. What tended to happen was that my data started to become broader, as certain topics such as "gender relations" and "clustering" became more important in the data. This broadening was a reflection of how the schooling experiences of the students were affected by factors other than those that occurred in the classroom.

Trying to find themes was not always easy because my questioning route determined categories, and at times masked themes within themes. What I had to do was to look within my main themes, for example interpersonal relations, and try to ascertain, how racialization operated with this area. I found that there was more than one way in which the data could be analyzed, and that my data did not represent one "truth" (Foucault, cited in Gordon, 1980). As with most human interaction, what was going on within the schooling experiences of these students was complex, and operating on many levels. Whichever window I used for my interpretation was just one of many possibilities.

Accountability is an important issue when presenting the views and perceptions of any research population (Acker, Barry and Esseveld, 1983, p. 149). In one focus group this was crystallized for me when a student indicated that:

> ... what you are doing right now is awesome because you are like speaking for all of us with this thesis or what ever you are doing. (focus group)

Responsibility to the student participants makes writing the data analysis problematic because I feel a great deal of responsibility in "getting it right" even though I realize that "getting it right" implies that there is one fixed truth.

I tend to agree with Foucault that:

> like freedom, truth is not guaranteed by external objects but depends upon the practices of individuals who are seeking precisely to form their subjectivity in relation to truth (cited in O'Farrell, 1989, p. 127).

What I am indicating by this is that though the sub-theme of knowledge and how it articulates with racialization, is foregrounded in the data, it does not fix this theme as the one and only perspective that can be gained from the data.

Research on race is not only a sensitive issue, but also has social and political consequence because it can be used to support essentialist ideas based on biology (Jensen, 1968; Eysenck, 1967; Herrnstein, 1994). Chomsky (1972) indicates that all scientific research should be treated with scepticism, and whereas my research was not quantitative, nonetheless those reading it can mistakenly use the data to draw generalizations about the general population of Black students. This is a caution that is paralleled in much of the literature that explains the nuances of qualitative research (Krueger, 1988, p. 43). For many who advocate qualitative research, "generalizability in interpretive studies...rests on the readers ability to generalize personally to their own situations rather than on the researcher's generalizing to populations larger than the sample used in the particular study" (McCutcheon, 1981, p. 8).

In presenting the data, I decided that I wanted to create a binocular effect so that the voices of the students would stand clear, and distinct next to my interpretation. Schoepfler and Werner conjure up a similar image when in referring to the presentation of qualitative data, they suggest that "stereo vision involves two images: the image of the left eye (the ethnographer's) and the image of the right eye (the natives's) " (p.311). I hoped that by applying this procedure, or "binocular" metaphor (Kluckhohn, 1949), I would be able to give two differing images that could then come together to focus on the research question. Without this binocular vision, there is a danger in overtheorising the students comments to such an extent that I undermine their value; a sort of massaging of the data in order to create a hypotheses. If we believe that perceptions affect the way that we interpret the world, then we need to be able to gain access to those virgin interpretations.

Validity/Reliability

For qualitative research, which aims to move from positivist claims of neutrality and objectivity, issues such as validity and reliability have to be viewed in a different way from traditional paradigms. Patti Lather suggests "that if illuminating and resonant theory grounded in trustworthy data is required, we must formulate self-corrective techniques that check the credibility of data, and minimizes the distorting effect of personal bias upon the logic of evidence" (1991, p. 66). As part of this process she indicates four main concepts; triangulation, construct validity, face validity, and catalytic validity. During the course of my research I attempted to integrate and make space for these concepts, with varying degrees of success.

Triangulation of the data is via the use of different sources of data, as well as different methods of collection. In effect I interviewed teachers along with students, and carried out individual interviews as well as focus interviews. All of this was against a background of existing theory garnered in my literature search thus enabling me to explore my data for counter patterns as well as convergence. Also, after the male focus interviews I was able to debrief the sessions with Malcolm thus providing the opportunity for us to discuss issues that arose, and how each of us interpreted the interviews.

Construct validity consists of constant dialogue between the theory, myself, and the participant's narrative. This perspective is best captured by Foucault's comment that a demanding prudent "experimental attitude is necessary; at every moment, step by step, one must confront what one is thinking and saying, with what one is doing, with what one is" (Foucault `Politics and Ethics' p. 374 S.S 79). This self-reflexivity involves operating "within a conscious context of theory - building" (Lather, 1991, p. 67), questioning what our role is in relation to the theory we are exploring.

Catalytic Validity was evident in the very nature of how the interviews were conducted. It is suggested that catalytic validity "represents the degree to which the research process re-orients, focuses and energizes the participants, towards knowing reality in order to transform it" (Lather, 1991, p. 68). The interviews enabled the students to realize that others had similar and differing perspectives on various issues, and allowed them to get together to think about how they would like school as an institution to take account of their needs and perspectives. This was verified by the following extract from my journal:

> At the end of our session, one of the participants introduces me to another student who he suggests should get involved "Cos we have some heavy deep discussion man". (Personal Journal School A: April 8th 1994)

And from a focus group interview:

J.S: How did you feel about the research?
I like these groups cause you can talk about a lot of things. It brings us closer.... It's not many times that all of us Black guys get together like this. Usually we are all out doing our own thing. I hope this happens again and perhaps gets a course for Black history. (Focus group School A)

In the female focus group in school B the following conversation took place:

J.S: Anything you want to talk about specifically that we haven't covered?
Lilieth: They should have these sessions all year round for boys and girls
Chorus: Together.
Bev: It would be very interesting, it would solve a lot of problems.... You would want to hear it from how a guy sees it because we just have our point of view. If we could see something from a guys point of view then we would understand something and maybe they could understand us too.
Grace: It would have to be controlled, so that everyone listened to you.
Hazel: We could understand why they think things about us...and we could respect each other better.

Face validity is integrated in the research by offering the students the opportunity to look at my provisional findings, and to comment on them. As such I attempted to "recycle descriptions, emerging analysis and conclusions through a subsample of respondents" (Lather, 1991, p. 67). Though the students were reluctant to directly criticize the themes that I had come up with they did elaborate on points I had raised. The process developed a broader and deeper understanding for me of issues such as what it means to be seen as "whitewashed", and also some reasons why gender relations take on the patterns that they do. I feel that with less time constraints this form of validation could have been more fully achieved.

Concluding Remarks

I have tried to attain an element of coherence between my methodology and the question that I am trying to understand. Students perceptions were what I was interested in tapping, and focus groups as my primary method of data collection, allowed the degree of flexibility and open-ended questioning necessary to tap perceptions and analysis. As part of the process of letting the students perceptions and views emerge, my presentation of data is in a narrative form which foregrounds the voices of the students. As with the " binocular" effect discussed above my voice is stronger in the other chapters of this thesis.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The remainder of this thesis is organized in the following way. Chapter 2 introduces a review of related concepts and literature. Chapter 3 indicates ways in which the students relate to aspects of wider youth culture, and how this affects the formation of their identities. The rationale for looking at youth cultures can be found in Giroux's comment that:

> students inhabit a photographic, aural, and televisual culture in which the proliferation of photographic and electronically produced images and sounds serves to actively produce knowledge and identities within particular sets of ideological and social practices" (1993, p.19).

The chapter also indicates how the identities adopted vary according to subjectivity and the situation within which they are located[2]. Chapter 4 outlines how the students' perception of themselves in the wider society affects cross ethnic and cross gender relations. Of particular note, we see how style becomes integrated with race and ethnicity and the meaning that other ethnic groups ascribe to this form of construction and representation (Hebdige 1979). Chapter 5 refers specifically to the students' experiences in the classroom and how they relate to the Social Studies and English Language curriculum. This section highlights the contradictory nature of the curriculum, and how it is perceived in different ways by teachers and Black students. In Chapter 6 the discussion and conclusion relate the findings to existing literature in order to indicate implications for the schooling of Black students. Though many of the aspects highlighted in this chapter refer to Black students, they nonetheless have implications for the schooling experiences of all students. Specific recommendations are made for teaching as well as paths for further research.

Endnotes

1. Racialization is a term coined by Robert Miles. He defines it as "any process or situation wherein the idea of race is introduced to define and give meaning to some particular population, its characteristics and actions" (Miles 1988, p. 246)

2. The position is reminiscent of the theoretical outline adopted by Valerie Walkerdine, in discussions of how girls adopt a gendered identity.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The conceptual framework for this work is that race and ethnicity are social constructs of identity which have to be understood within a societal context. These constructs affect the way in which Black students experience their schooling. This analysis does not subscribe to one theoretical framework but will be broadly based within a critical cultural studies framework. It borrows freely from empirical and theoretical studies of Black populations, schooling experience, and social interaction.

The literature regarding race and ethnicity is broad, ranging from the sociological to the psychological. For the purpose of this review I looked at some of the discussions prevalent in sociological literature, as well as some of the prevalent paradigms for analyzing how the constructs of race and ethnicity operate in society.

The review also looks at the varying educational responses of society to students of differing ethnic and racial origins to the dominant group. Research that utilizes the perspectives of Black students will be highlighted, as well as research that has been undertaken in Canada incorporating Canadian dimension.

Theoretical Explanations

The way in which race and ethnicity has been theorized is often a reflection of the needs of society to explain the changes that are taking place within. As Percy Cohen states "theory is like a blank checque, its potential value depends on the user and his [her] use of it" (1973, p.1). At different periods of time the literature adopts different foci depending on the changes it is attempting to understand. Thus we see a shift in focus of theoretical analysis from one that highlights the reaction of differing groups to contact with each other to present day perspectives which deconstruct how the terminologies themselves are used as part of a process of domination. Though the primary focus of the study is "racialization", we need an understanding of ethnicity and how it relates to race as a concept, since its usage is common in society and overlaps with theories used to explain the articulation of race.

The constructs of ethnicity and race are part of a struggle over terminology and definition, a theme that runs throughout the literature. Ethnicity is a more recent construct, and though used to classify peoples of African descent it is problematic as outlined below. People of African descent who are part of the diaspora, have existed in societies dominated by Whites economically or numerically. therefor, the relationship between the two groups has been one constructed on race and dominance. However, it is worth investigating the literature.

Richard Alba (1992) suggests that three approaches dominate the sociological study of ethnicity; assimilation, stratification, and ethnic group resources. He sees assimilation as representing a focus on social processes and outcomes that tend to dissolve ethnic distinctions, leading to assimilation of one ethnic group by another. The second approach of "stratification" is concerned with origins and consequences of inequalities of various kinds among ethnic groups. The third approach of "ethnic resources" encompasses such processes as mobilization and solidarity by which members of ethnic groups attempt to use their ethnicity to compete successfully with others (Alba,1992).

Ethnicity as a theoretical concept and a form of classification came to the fore as populations became more mobile (Banks 1986). Many western countries became the magnet for populations looking for economic, social or political stability. In the United States (U.S) theoreticians such as Parks (1950) at the Chicago school gave theoretical support to the existing liberal ideology by focusing his work on an assimilationist perspective. His research implied a state of "fait accompli" whereby contact between groups would naturally lead to accommodation and assimilation. Expanded and refined by Gordon (1964) into a multi-dimensional perspective of seven types the concept of assimilation incorporates many of the terms used in everyday discussions of ethnicity, race and intergroup relations.

Of these seven perspectives, the three which emerge as having the most common theoretical usage are; " anglo-conformity", "melting pot," and "cultural pluralism."

Anglo-conformity is seen as assimilation that is limited to acculturation to the behavior and values of the core ethnic group, which in the American context of Gordan's research were Protestants with ancestry from the British Isles.

The "melting pot" assumes an assimilation process that operates on cultural and structural levels. The supposed outcome of this process is a culture that contains contributions from various cultures and is adopted by their members.

Cultural pluralism is the position that has become advocated as having most relevance for many western societies. This model describes a position in which ethnic groups remain socially differentiated, have high rates of group intermarriage, as well as retaining some culturally distinctive features (Alba, 1992).

As if in an attempt to manage this diversity, greater emphasis was placed on the organization of a nation state, in which one culture -- the Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-Celtic -- was dominant. The implications of the latter was that, ethnic and cultural groups were expected to subsume their original cultures in order to become effective citizens of their nation-states (McClaren 1993: Lawrence 1982). James Banks, suggests that this assimilationist ideology that dominated the Western nations was undergirded by a liberal expectancy and a liberal ideology that envisioned a nation-state in which individuals from all ethnic, cultural and racial groups are able to participate fully" (1986, p.3). A dichotomy exists within this liberal paradigm however, in that liberals believe that "in a modernized equitable society, individual rights are paramount; group rights are secondary" (Banks 1986, p.3). As part of this stress on nation-state, we can see how liberals would be critical of a traditionalism which they suggest promotes inequality via group awareness, and favoritism. This view is encapsulated by Cynthia Enloe's statement that "like a midwife, an ethnic group may assist at the birth but should be ready to depart soon afterward". By implication, groups founded on ethnic allegiance are seen to compete with the nation-state, and as such, are viewed "intolerable because the nation-state is the vehicle for development" (1973, p.261).

The literature indicates that how one comes to be located in a society is important in how one perceives social interactions within that a society. Immigration is not a uniform experience for all ethnic groups, and is affected by the degree of so called "visibility" as defined by the host communities as well as the mode of entry of a group into society (Verma & Ashworth 1986). Lieberson (1961) in supporting this viewpoint distinguishes between a situation whereby the migrant group dominates typically through conquest as in the case of contact between indigenes and European settlers in Australia and the United States and those who voluntarily resettle. Ogbu's work (1983:1992) makes the distinction between "immigrant minorities" and "involuntary castelike minorities, and how the groups have differing responses and strategies to the societies in which they find themselves. Focussing on African Americans as nonimmigrant minorities, who were incorporated into the dominant society through slavery, he postulates that as a result of the harsh experience of racism, and economic discrimination over generations they have developed "adaptive strategies" for survival and oppositional frames of references. Applying his work to schools as a critique of "cultural difference" theorists he indicates how these frames of references invert the dominant society's values and affect the experiences of some students. Yinger suggests other variables to add to the differing responses to entry include, extent of geographical concentration, the degree to which the group is similar in language, religion and race to the dominant group, and the strength of feeling of deprivation. This latter, is especially important in technically advanced societies among groups on the social or geographical periphery that have not kept pace, economically and politically, with the dominant group (1987, p.27).

In present day Canadian society the term ethnic groups is used popularly to refer to immigrants from non-British and non-French backgrounds especially those from third world countries. In problematizing the issue of ethnicity Errol Lawrence (1982) sees similar problems in Britain. Illustrative of this is Michael Omi and Howard Winant's remark that "most whites do not experience their ethnicity as a definitive aspect of their social identity, they perceive it dimly and irregularly, picking and choosing among its varied strands to exercise,...an "ethnic option" (1992). Moodly (1992) urges that in Canada "we should remember that the change of studies in race relations to "ethnic relations" in the late 1960s and early 1970s was a political move on the part of the state to diffuse racial tensions among different groups in the U.S., notably between Black and White Americans. In Canada this terminology was adopted to diffuse the antagonistic relations between Quebec and English Canada, and between the Native people, other minority groups and the Canadian state. Thus it is important to bear in mind that definitions and meanings of ethnicity and race are social constructions that shift constantly, reflecting the changing dynamics of gender, race/ethnic, and relations over time" (Ng 1993, p.185).

As part of the growth in ethnic classification is a decline in the academic usage of the word race. The literature indicates that race can be viewed in differing ways dependent on our theoretical focus (Rex 1986: Van den Berghe 1986: Miles 1982). Within the literature there is a suggestion that race can be seen as either an ideological construct or an objective construct. As an ideological construct it can be understood in the Marxian sense of false consciousness that explains other material conditions. Barbara Fields (1990) suggests that the concept of race was founded on an ideological need as a means of explaining slavery to people whose terrain was a republic founded on radical doctrines of liberty and natural rights. Robert Miles and Annie Phizacklea would agree with Field that race serves no real analytic purpose since it is an ideological construction. They further suggest that this "process of attributing meaning results in the reification of real social relations into ideological categories and leads to a common- sense acceptance that race is an objective determinant. As such they adopt a Marxist perspective which substitutes the term race for "racialization" which is able to incorporate the dimension of race as social construct. Thus they see "racialization" or "racial categorization" as a process of construction which attributes meanings to certain patterns of phenotypical variation (Miles 1982, p 153-67).

Omni and Winant (1993) critique this view point on two fronts. First they suggest that it fails to recognize that the salience of a social construct can develop over half a millennium or more of diffusion, or enforcement, as a fundamental principle of social organization and identity formation. Secondly, this perspective fails to recognize that at the level of experience, of everyday life, race is an almost indissoluable part of our identities. "Our society is so thoroughly racialized that to be without racial identity is to be in danger of having no identity" (Omni & Winant 1993, p.5).

Other scholars, while recognizing the powerful impact of the social definitions of observable physical differences, recommend either that the term `race' be set aside (Montagu, 1974) or that it be used to refer, not to a subspecies, but as van den Berghe puts it, `...a socially defined group which sees itself and is seen by others as being phenotypically different from other such groups' (1983, p.222). Thus van den Berghe indicates a useful distinction between `race' as a social classification based on physical traits, and ethnicity as a classification based on culture.

For British sociologist, Michael Banton, race as classification grew up hand in hand with the scientific exploration of human origins (Banton, 1967;1977) and that's, where it was incorporated into racist theory; it purported to offer an explanation of and justification for the exploitation and subordination of Blacks by Whites in terms of those social origins. David Smith (1986) while accepting Banton's point as to the rationale for an earlier focus on the construct of race nonetheless does not accept that it should be necessarily abandoned. Smith argues that it is essential to maintain the concept of race, because "unlike ethnic identity, racial identity and/or difference is immutable, manifest and normally unambiguous in multiracial societies and contexts" (cited in Mason 1986, p.6). Gross phenotypical differences, are markers of status whether or not other `cultural' differences are present. Because they have a genetic foundation, they are both permanent and hereditarily transmitted and thus inferior or superior statuses are transmitted across generations. Paradoxically, even though Smith recognizes the social nature of the concept of race, he wishes to avoid the claim that such differences are merely socially constructed; that they are readily malleable and deconstructed.

Race as objective condition

Race as terminology is problematic because its usage can imply race as an objective element. Much of the liberal and radical theorizing around race though "committed to a social rather than biological interpretation of race nevertheless slip into a kind of objectivism about racial identity and racial meaning" (Omni & Winant, p.6). It is often treated as an independent variable. Contemporary racial theory then is often objectivist about its fundamental category. Although abstractly acknowledged to be a socio- historical social construct, race in practice is often treated as an objective fact; one simply is one's race. Objectivist treatments lacking a critique of the constructed character of racial meanings, also clash with experiential dimensions of the issue, if one doesn't act "Black" "White" etc,that's just deviance from the norm. Critique of this perspective suggests that it cannot grasp the process oriented and relational character of racial identity and racial meaning; it denies the historicity and social comprehensiveness of the race concept; it cannot account for theway actors both individual and collective, have to manage incoherent and conflictual racial meanings and identities in everyday life (Omni & Winant 1993). In other words, it has noconcept of racial formation.

What is interesting in the above literature is the way in which the negative aspects of categorization based on race is recognized, but ethnicity is seen as "innocent." In reality, any construct which entails categories is suspect, since it also implies the potential for creating hierarchies and therefore dominance. British theorist Errol Lawrence in The Empire Strikes Back (1982), is critical of some of the terminology to do with ethnicity, he highlights particularly the term `ethnic minorities', which he suggests refers too quickly to the realm of `culture' and once there it becomes difficult to descend to more mundane levels. His rationale for this is that ethnicity is defined in cultural and / or religious terms and once we take `ethnic identity' rather than gender, age, class, caste, etc., as our fundamental unit of analysis, we are in danger of sliding into a kind of `cultural pluralism' which is incapable of recognizing that these `determinations' act in concert rather than subsequently `interacting' with each other. It says nothing about the relations which bind the various `ethnic minorities' together and by means of which some groups are subordinated to others (1982).

Discussing the Canadian context, Roger Simon, suggests that ethnicity is recognized as a term which has come to be used to name and mark off culturally and racially varied "places". These "places" are space/time locations whose difference can be defined by either the particular physiological distinctions or linguistic, artistic, mythic, culinary, and relational practices of the particular group of people" (Simon, p.35). Ethnicity organizes an understanding of differences between various sets of these signs and practices, it is a procedure which ethnifies by defining who and what is "other" and how such social groupings should be charted on a map. Simon further implies that ethnicity takes practices which have evolved over time and is evolving, and spacializes them, so that they can be administered. He suggests that this is an ethnicity favored by the rulers in that it can be controlled, "governed, packaged, marketed and consumed within space" (Simon, p.35). He draws the analogy of a social map which is a priori essential for the administration of any policy which defines the spaces where ethnicity can and does and should go on. In line with the latter, Phillip Corrigan comments that ethnicity must always be seen as a double concept, as both a process which describes and legitimates difference, as it also correspondingly references a produced culture of the "Other". Explaining the hegemonic impact of the adoption of ethnicity, bell hooks states, "the eagerness with which contemporary society does away with racism, replacing, this recognition with evocation of pluralism and diversity that further mask reality, is a response to the terror, but it has also become a way to perpetuate that terror by providing a cover, a hiding place" (1992 p.176).

Construction and Represenation of Identity

Explanations of race and ethnicity are affected by developments in other theoretical areas. Thus in recent years, developments in post-structuralist, feminist, and post modern theory have been reflected in theorizations about race; all part of what Warren Crichlow (1993) suggests has been a rise in the demand for the recognition of difference and diversity in many societies.

As part of this growth of recognition of differences, has been the development of Cultural Studies which has attempted "to link its intellectual critique with a cultural politics that builds possibilities for radical democracy" (Sholle, 1992, p.272). As such Cultural theorists have been able to attempt to analyze how race and ethnicity are articulated in present day constructions of identity. So we find that terminologies and theories have adapted and changed as day to day interaction between groups who are visibly different has increased. In the days of colonialism, and the Empire, when the "Other" was at a distance, it was adequate for crude biological racial categories to be used when discussing those who were deemed different and subordinate.

Culture has become the new basis for racial categorisation, replacing crude obsession with pigmentation and representative of what Martin Barker calls the "new racism". Along with this, has been the growing theoretical recognition that cultures are not absolutes (Hall 1990: Bhabha 1990). Henry Giroux and David Trend indicate that "culture is viewed as the reified product of genius rather than a dialogic process that develops among people" (1992, p.60). In support of this dialogic process Jane Desmond's article

Embodying Difference: Issues in Dance and Cultural Studies indicates :

> New practices necessarily arose within the new historical context of slavery, which mixed Africans from many distinctive linguistic and social groups ... [as well as affecting] [w]hite cultural practices including notions of paternity, cooking, language, and so forth (1993-4 p.41).

As Giroux and Trend (1993) caution we should be "attentive to the ways that peoples lived relations can be fictionalised in depiction of `race',`age',`class' and `sexual orientation'". Hall concurs with this position and indicates that cultural identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think. He posits the existence of two types of cultural identity, the first based on common culture a sort of "collective one true self", and a second which recognizes that as well as the many points of similarity, there are also critical points of deep and significant difference (1990, p.226). The literature implies that we need to remember that representation and reality are concepts that determine and are determined by each other. People don't act or view the world in a certain way because they are Black, women or lower class; they do so because they are raced, gendered classed and their experiences are constructed socially both by themselves and by others (Levinson p.220).

Based on concepts such as "othering" "marginalization" and the presumed racelessness of Whites, cultural theory literature attempts to explicate the way in which these constructions operate in a process of domination. Theorization draws on Gramsci's (1971) work on hegemony, Fanon's (1967) on "othering" in conjunction with Foucault's insights on power, to undermine the taken for granted nature of race, ethnicity and culture. As part of the process of using culture as a reference point for marginalization the theory implicates the use of Whiteness as a reference point. In this way, Whiteness is given a category of invisibility and a covert sense of dominance. As Hazel Carby outlines, we have to recognize that the process of marginalization itself is "central to the formation of the dominant culture. The first and very important stage is...to recognize the cultural and political category of Whiteness. It seems obvious to say it but in practice the racialization of our social order is only recognized in relation to racialized "others" (cited in Giroux 1993 p.131). Whites within society do not have their ethnicity made apparent. For many Whites, ethnicity is something that belongs to someone else that they can purchase. The suggestion is that when White identity loses its transparency and the easy elision with "racelessness" that accompanies racial domination "Whiteness becomes a matter of anxiety and concern" (McCarthy & Critchlow, p.8). Indicative of this growing concern with Whiteness has been texts by Ruth

Frankenberg (1994) and Jeater (1993) both of whom question what it means to be White.

Throughout the cultural studies literature, importance is given to the role that history plays in culture and identity. As such it can act as a form of domination and marginalization as well as a form of resistance to domination. Congruent with this analysis are comments by Bell Hooks, that "I am located in the margins. I make a distinction between that marginality which is imposed by the oppressive structures and that marginality one chooses as a site of resistance - as occasion of radical openness and possibility" (1990, p.153). As Hudak concurs:

> by locating oneself within the margins, one refuses to forget the past and instead keep it alive in memory. When memory is politicized, the margins come to represent a social location that is on the one hand a place of `deprivation' and on the other a way of seeing reality whose intent is survival and resistance (1993, p.174).

Continuing with the historical theme, Giroux and Trend imply that "historical memory rejects the notion of the past as a linear progression, history as an unproblemtic train of thought moving forward toward greater heights of achievement. For them a counter-memory can be used as source of resistance. Foucault crystallizes this theme when he suggest that "since memory is actually a very important factor in struggle...if one controls people's memory, one controls their dynamism. And one controls their experience, their knowledge of previous struggles" (Foucault, 1989, p.92).

Essentialism emerges as an important point of discussion within cultural theory. Brought to prominence in the area of feminist research the charge of essentialism has been leveled against the theoretical treatment of social groups as homogeneous and stable entities (Wallace 1990; Carby 1982; hooks 1983). Wallace (1990) maintains that differences in political and cultural behavior of minority women and men are determined by social and historical contingencies and not by some essential checklist, of innate biological or cultural characteristics. Thus, social and racial differences are seen as the products of human work (Edward Said, 1985). For hooks, challenging essentialism within the African American community provides the opportunity to undermine racism in the guise of the "authentic black." She sees it as a way of "acknowledging how class mobility has altered collective black experiences as well as enabling us to affirm multiple black identities, varied black experience" (1992, p). As with all theoretical positions, there is no wholesale adoption of anti-essentialist arguments. Herman Gray while not totally rejecting the need to critique essentialism posits the opposite perspective. He indicates that all too often arguments about essentialism are posed around textual representation and that material locations and practices of different sectors of the Black community as well as the cultural desires through which they are constructed, are given little account (1993, p.367). He suggests that we should "not simply read on those desires the arrogance and privilege of our own location", and indicates instead, how adoption of an anti-essentialisat perspective may well be as a result of our social location. As intellectuals, it is often possible for those of us operating in such spaces to experience ourselves and others more fully in terms of the multiple and complex subject positions that characterize our lives (p.370). Frankenberg and Mani echo this perspective in their statement that "abstract theoreticism that adjudicates between positions solely on the basis of `theoretical correctness' seem to us to aggrandize theory, while failing to grasp the complex and contradictory workings of power/knowledge" (1993, p.301).

Theorist such as Homi Bhabha prefer a position which does not imply binary opposites of "either" "or" when discussing Black identity. Bhabha interjects with the idea of a "third space", whereby Black identity is not essentialist, but neither is it integrationist, requiring a rejection of Black culture (1990). Hall adopts this notion and advocates a "hybridity" of identity whereby "these hybrids retain strong links to and identifications with traditions and places of their `origin'. But they are without the illusion of any actual `return' to the past." (1993, p.362). hooks also suggests an intervention in the "either" "or" dichotomy when she highlights that one can critique essentialism while emphasizing the significance of "authority of the experience." As she indicates, there is a radical difference between a repudiation of the idea that there is a Black "essence" and recognition of the way black identity has been specifically constituted in the experience of exile and struggle (1990).

In conjunction with theorizing around essentialism, the writings of feminists such as hooks (1992), Collins (1990) and Carby (1983) indicate that just as there is no unified Black subject so there is no one unified subject "woman". The purpose of this theorizing is to show that Black women have differing societal constructions, and as such the focus of their struggles against patriarchal relations are different to those of the White feminists theorizing in this area. This also highlights how for Black women, their relationship with Black men varies as they form alliances against racism, and challenge them on patriarchal relations. As Carby states, though:

> Black men exhibit male-dominant behavior and exercise influence on the ways in which Black women live, although they cannot be said to hold the same positions of power or exercise the systemic male dominance of white men. Black men are not now and never have been privy to the power structures established during slavery, colonialism,

> or the current configuration of capitalism. These power structures, because they are intrinsically racist, can only accommodate Black men at the bottom (1983 p.234).

As well our racial identity being formed from our past, it is also derived from present practices (Hall 1990). As Michael Foucault observed, in the constitution of one's identity "these practices...are not something that the individual invents by himself. They are patterns that he finds in his culture and which are proposed, suggested, and imposed on him by his culture, his society and his social group" (Foucault 1988, p.11: Butler 1990). The literature indicates that the media in the form of television, print, as well as music are very much part of those practices. For Henry Giroux the implication of the media in the construction of identity hinges on the postulate that we "...inhabit a photographic aural and televisual culture in which the proliferation of photographic and electronically produced images and sounds serves to actively produce knowledge and identities within particular sets of ideological and social practices" (Giroux, 1993, p.19). Gray indicates that in the some of the most notable U.S:

> television shows, music videos and films, the construction of blackness and community is mobilized through various emblems of the imagined black nation, a mythic African past, and heroic black masculinity. These are expressed in the dress, hairstyles, language, bodies of young black (mostly) males who wear, speak and look the part of `real brother.' From Do the Right Thing to Boyz'n the Hood... (1993, p.368).

Though young directors John Singleton and Spike Lee would prefer to see themselves as having moved towards a stance which is "rebellious, sociologically important, entrenched in the Black psyche" (George 1992, p.5), these films have been criticized as portraying masculinist and nationalist represenations (Hooks 1992: George 1992: Gray 1993).

Much of the literature indicates the part that rap music plays in evoking certain images of young Black men. Julia Koza outlines succinctly the role of the print media in this process of representation of young Black men as alien threat. News commentaries also have a role to play in representation of young Black men, as Deborah Britzman indicates: commentaries are overdetermined by forms of racism and sexism that contradictorily work to racialize and unracialize and genderize and ungenderize. In this discourse, Blacks are never victims, white men are never raced, black masculinity is always criminalized, white women are perpetually victimized, and black woman are irrelevant. Yet it is this discourse that dominates contemporary racist and sexist narratives in ways that essentialize the meaning of identity, difference, and otherness (1991, p.93).

Response Of Schools To Ethnic And Racial Differences

The two primary explanations for racial interaction are represented by the Neo-Marxist, and the Liberal perspective. Neo-Marxist school critics theorize racial antagonism as an effect of the capital-labour contradiction. They indicate that school deliver minorities via a differentiated curriculum, to the secondary labour market. This deterministic outlook is representative of the position adopted by Bowles and Gintis in their work Schooling in Capitalist America (1976) Though recent Marxist theorizing around race has become more sophisticated, it still remains secondary to the primacy of economic determinism. McCarthy and Critchlow also note further weakening in the Marxist ideology in that "the old Marxists and Neo - Marxist orthodoxies, of class and economic primacy in education are being replaced by the new pan-ethnic cultural orthodoxies of racial origins and racial identity" (p. xiv).

Liberal theorists are more idealist in their postulations, they have attempted to show the connections between minority failure and differential patterns of socialization, individual teacher values, preferences, and expectations. Also a correlation with a pathological construction of minority cognitive capacities (Jensen, 1984) child rearing practices (Bell, 1975), family structures Moynihan, and linguistic styles (Orr, 1987). Curriculum practices and interventions predicated on these approaches attempt to influence positive changes in minority school performance through the manipulation of specific school variables such as teacher behavior, methods of testing, placement and counselling.

As background to how schools respond to students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds is the construct of cultural pluralism. Banks (1986) suggest that the assumption behind cultural pluralism is that it will provide a base upon which ethnic minorities will be able to attain equality of achievement. Central to cultural pluralism is the notion that power lies in different cultural groups in roughly equal amounts and that theoretically this power enables the groups to maintain their cultural distinctiveness, and to exert political power on the State. In reality, cultural groups do not possess equal power or status in society, and are not able to control institutions that affect changes in their lives (Porter 1965). The move towards cultural pluralism can be seen as part of an ethnic revitalization move initiated in the 1960s most ofwhich are framed in term of multicultural education. These responses by educational systems to ethnic revitalization movements can be seen as "dynamic, and multidimensional" paradigms based on the concept of multicultural education (1986, p.6). By indication these paradigms allow us to categorize the varying responses that takeplace within the education system as a result of the demands made by ethnic groups and those who have been marginalized by powerful groups within society. The paradigms range from "ethnic additive" which consists of the infusion of bits and pieces about ethnic groups into the curriculum, through to a "radical paradigm" which adopts a Neo Marxist perspective and suggests "the school is part of the problem and plays a key role in keeping ethnic groups oppressed" (Banks, p.19).

Grant and Sleeter (1986) also have a framework that attempts to analyze the various perspectives of multicultural education. Their emphasis is on how as individuals we are multi-dimensional and that each individual simultaneously belongs to a socio-economic class, a gender and an ethnic group(s). The indication is that each of us also constructs a personal reality which may be influenced and constrained by our ethnicity, class, or gender. This leads to their assertion that multicultural education is not in practice one identifiable course or educational program, rather it encompasses a wide variety of programs and practices related to equity, women, ethnic groups, language minorities. They further postulate that there are three main perspectives on cultural diversity that the educator can take:
i) cultural deficit -- an entity causing cultural in need of change) ii) a cultural mismatch -- an entity causing culturally diverse learners to fail because their traits are not compatible with the U.S. system) iii) culturally different -- an entity that enriches the classroom and makes individuals unique. The importance of the latter for learning is that "rather than being just an academic question, educator's perception of diversity determines their philosophical beliefs toward learners and learning, and the actual instructional practices employed" (Baruth and Manning 1992). It is also worth noting an offshoot of this latter perspective whch is based on empowerment and possibilities for inter-cultural dialogue. A specific criticism of this broad based type of multicultural focus is made by Gay (1983). She cautions that if we adopt a version of multiculturalism based on race, gender and class, as advocated by Grant and Sleeter then multicultural education's assault on racism will be weakened considerably if it is also attempting to deal simultaneously with other forms of discrimination. Introducing other forms of oppressions such as sexism can only fragment Blacks.

With a cultural deficit model social scientists described the culturally different as "deprived" "disadvantaged" and "socially deprived" only because they demonstrated behavior different from middle-class values, language systems and customs. Placing the situation within a class perspective, middle-class Anglo-Americans often assumed that other cultures did not seek to advance themselves because of a cultural deficit (Draguns 1989). Instead of attributing racial differences to genetics as previously, blame shifts to cultural lifestyles or values. Frank Reissman's book, The Culturally Deprived Child (1962) spread the notion that lacking middle-class advantages such as education and books, formal language experiences contributed to less than desirable educational progress. In essence, this mode of thinking results in blaming the victim for not being more successful. This model has failed to address the implicit cultural biases that shaped negative perceptions and inhibited the understanding of the role of socio-political forces (Jenkins, 1982) and has been refuted and replaced by the "culturally different" model (Draguns, 1989). Hazel Carby a British feminist suggests that repression and inequality cannot be meaningfully confronted by simply adding more "sensitive" curriculum materials to or including new voices in the school syllabus (1990, 1992).

In Canada, multicultural education derived from the general multicultural policy which was passed in 1971, to deal with the antagonisms between the Francophones and the Anglophones. Moodley indicates the ambiguity that surrounds the concept of multiculturalism in Canada. She suggests that it is seen by some as a way of improving the self-concept of minority children by including their heritage and presence in the curriculum. Others, she suggests see multicultural education as a "palliative which does little to recognize the real needs of language education, inequality of access, and of the racism which differentiates between physically assimilable minorities and visible ones" (1992, p.89). The Canadian situation is exacerbated by the fact that Canada has no national multicultural education policy and as such its development is at the behest of individual provinces (Tator & Henry 1991). Moodley highlights that underlying the ambivalence about multicultural education, is the general ethos within society which only nominally accepts pluralism. To illustrate this lack of pluralism, she highlights that though multiculturalism is advocated at the educational and ideological level, it does not transcend into the "higher echelons of political power. In effect this supports the research findings by Porter in his 1965 book The Vertical Mosaic, wherein he purports that ethnic inequality exists in the occupational structure, and that the ethnic elites are mainly of British background (Clements 1975; 1977; Darroch 1979).

The ambiguity in Canadian multicultural education can be seen as being in two strands, namely, ethnocultural support-service orientation as pursued by Ontario and Nova Scotia, and a language - based view of multicultural education as practiced in the provinces of Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba (Tator & Henry 1991).

Underlying these foci of multicultural education are two perspective that Moodley suggests can be defined as social-pathological or relativistic. The social-pathological perspective focuses on the cultural background or lifestyle of the minority as a problem, a perspective exemplified in the 1963 study by Glazer and Moynihan. The relativistic approach is derived from the anthropological work of Malinowski, and states that culture should be judged from the perspective of the culture being studied in that way no culture is regarded as inferior, but rather, is seen as distinct.

Anti-racist education

Developed primarily in Britain, anti-racist education literature blossomed alongside other political and racial tensions present in the society, the essence of the anti-racist critique of multicultural education is that it fails to acknowledge "the way in which (different) cultures were produced and existed in social relations of power, of dominance and subordination (Carby, 1982, p.193). Anti-racists are united by their belief that racism is about power rather that culture. Sarup suggests that multicultural education adversely affects the education of black children; it is a misguided liberal strategy to compensate black children for not being white" (1991, p.31).

Multicultural education is accused of ignoring issues such as the economic position of black people in relation to white people; differences in access to resources; discrimination in employment, housing and education; as well as relations with the police. Sarup continues with his critique to indicate that multicultural education focuses on culture only; moreover it reflects "white people's view of black culture as homogeneous and static and conflict free" (Sarup, 1991 p.31). Critics of multiculturalism see it as a liberal approach which supports equality of opportunity, based on the eradication of discrimination on the grounds of race class and gender. They are perceived as having no critique of society; they do not want to change capitalism.

Rhetoric and practice have to be viewed differently when discussing multiculturalism and anti-racism. Troyna & Williams analyzed local British education authority anti-racist policies and found that their underlying ideology is no different to that of cultural pluralism because of their emphasis on themes such as justice and equality (1986, pp.100-106). Gaine (1987) distinguishes between `weak' anti-racism (education for equality), which includes the form of anti-racism promoted in anti-racist policies, and `strong' anti-racism which links racial oppression with class. At times "strong" anti-racism has itself been criticised for reductionism to a "class" model. There may be little distinction between multiculturalism and liberal anti-racist; multicultural education (Duncan 1988).

In response to the multiculturalist preoccupation with self-esteem, "anti-racists have rejected any form of analysis which may smack of a blame the victim approach" (Cashmore & Troyna, 1983, p.188). Gerwirtz using a poststructuralist perspective and relating racism to sexism suggests that the relationship of Blacks and women to racism and sexism is extremely complex and cannot be explained in terms of self-esteem alone. Due to its emphasis on attitudes it has been heavily criticized by Marxist anti-racists such as Murray who describes it as an attempt "to massage the White psyche" (1985, p.25).

Anti-racism suggests that society is made up of distinct, yet complex interrelated levels of the ideological, political, economic and theoretical. Racism is often seen as being active on a variety of levels within society. The three most commonly used for social analysis are institutional, interpersonal, and state. Institutional racism, is the level between the individual and the state, ie the racism manifested in large institution. Racism on this level is often expressed in a taken for granted customs, routine practices and procedures. Interpersonal and institutional racism are not separate and distinct levels of racism, there are dialectical links between them. State racism, indicates that though the state is often thought of as neutral in reality it can be racist, e.g racist immigration laws (Lawrence 1982; Carby 1982; Ng 1993). Though it is profitable to investigate the structural levels of racism, caution is urged by theorists that in focussing on racism as a structural phenomenon, the question of whether certain parts of its ideology are internalized by the oppressed has not been explored.

In the U.S. multicultural curriculum, has been advocated as a way of giving ethnic minority children a `voice' in the construction of their classroom knowledge and reality (Sleeter & Grant 1991; Banks 1983; Giroux 1988). Darder (1991) in looking at the U.S. suggests that "educators need to be more critical in their assessment of multicutural curricula and activities with respect to the consequences of their use in the classroom" (p.115). He warns that even the most ideologically correct curriculum is in danger of objectifying students if it is utilized in such a way as to detach them from their everyday lives.

One of the primary critics of anti-racist education in Britain has been Robert Jeffcoate, who in line with a liberal perspective advocates that pupils should feel free to express their opinions in the classroom no matter what their political or ideological content may be. His suggestion is that they are learning at the same time to test them against publicly accredited criteria of truth and rationality and observe the rule of democratic procedure (Sarup 1993). In a different vein Robin Grinter (1985) has argued strongly for the need to bridge the gap, seeing that "multicultural and anti-racist education are essential to each other. They are logically connected and each alone is inadequate. Each is appropriate to different stages and contexts in education and must be part of a combined strategy if either is to have any real effect" (1993, Fyfe, p.43).

Research On Black Youth Experiences In Schools: Overview Of Literature Related To Education

Most of the research on the relationship between race and education is located in the U.S. and to a lesser extent in Britain. The group mentioned most consistently throughout the U.S. literature are African Americans, who are seen as underachieving in relation to their White peers and having a higher `attrition' rate. In the Canadian context, interest in the topic of racism in schools has grown since the 1970's with most of the research being undertaken in the Ontario school system, focusing on Toronto (Henry 1986).

General throughout the literature is a suggestion that teacher's have a low expectation level for visible minority groups.

The following section of related literature will thememátically explore some of the research issues pertaining to the schooling experiences of Black students. Most research involving Black students has been aimed at trying to ascertain underachievement in school or to investigate higher drop out rates in comparison to their peers. Of the variety of perspectives offered by the literature, achievement, racism and gender will be discussed.

Educational Achievement

For Mac an Ghaill (1988), the structures of society are more important than a clash of culture in accounting for the educational underachievement of Black students. Drawing methodologically and theoretically from Paul Willis's (1977) work on "resistance" and "contestation." Mac an Ghaill sees his work as critiquing the culturalist perspective which is prevalent in educational theory. Canadian literature suggests that the situation in Toronto, especially Scarborough is similar to some cities in Britain, with many of the Black students underachieving or `dropping out' despite having high aspirations. There is an acknowledgment with this group of pupils that teacher expectation and attitudes are of importance as well as attitudes of White students and the inherent structure of the school.

Henry (1986) suggests that Black students who have come through the primary or secondary system are fewer in number than are either recent immigrants or visa students. Using evidence from Toronto (North York Board 1985) Henry indicates that this process is achieved via the streaming. Blacks are streamed in to that technical and vocational rather than the academic streams. The result is that they miss academic training in high school, but more seriously, they are not eligible for university (Henry 1986).

Thakur's (1988) study Schooling and its Cultural Implications Among Visible Minorities was carried out in Alberta using questionnaires and case study approach. His findings indicate that Black students were not achieving the educational advantage of some of their parents. Although he did not find widespread streaming or tracking in Alberta schools, he suggests that it does exist and that if "the process of status displacement and downward mobility continues, streaming or tracking will become more widespread" (p.62).

A Mennonite study undertaken in Edmonton echoes findings in the city of Scarborough, Ontario where a higher percentage of Black students are achieving lower grades that their non-Black peers (Tator & Henry 1991). In the Edmonton study, indications are that whereas 78% of Eastern European immigrant youths are achieving A's and B's Africans along with Latin Americans in the sample rank last with 38% getting A's and B's.

Gender

Mac an Ghaill (1988) uses narratives to explore the views and perceptions of both male and female Black students. He highlights the way in which the boys use different strategies from the girls in order to resist the alienation of schooling. He categorizes the girls form of resistance as "accommodation within resistance". This form of covert resistance is also highlighted by other studies which "tap" the perspective of Black girls (Fuller 1980). **Fuller** in interpreting the behavior of Afro-Caribbean girls, notes that "much to the confusion of their teachers, their overt attitude gives the impression of total disaffection with school: for example they chat and read magazines in class, appear not to be listening, arrive at lessons at the very last minute and hand in written work late. In reality this behavior masks the fact that they are completing work and are academically successful (cited in Gewirtz, p. 189). Even the "high attaining Black girls, in spite of their high academic aspirations displayed attitudes and behavior which were source of puzzlement to their teachers and peers in their apparent unwillingness to adopt the role of the `good pupil'" (1983, p.59).

For Black males, Mac an Ghaill posits a more overt means of resistance which at the same time brings them to the attention of the administration and teachers. Their friendship patterns are more subcultural, than the females with the use of "toughness" and style to signify their identity (p. 97). In the studies investigated where narratives are used, a pattern emerges whereby the females indicate that for young Black males, peer group influence is greater, particularly in their attitude to schools as institutions (Riley 1985; Mac an Ghaill 1988; Furlong 1976).

In Toronto, Solomon (1987) studied a group of Black male students in a Toronto high school. He found that they formed a subcultural group based on sports involvement, and that by elaborating cultural themes imported from the West Indies, they have developed a separate identity system and by so doing have disassociated themselves from dominant Canadians. They tended to group themselves according to a sports subculture which was reinforced by their leisure activities, and language use. Solomon also found evidence of "resistance" and "contestation" similar to Willis (1977). He indicates that "Jocks" confined their friendship choices to their sport group, and showed fluidity toward other Black students in the school, but there was little voluntary meaningful relationship between ethnic and racial groups" (p.207).

Weis's research into an urban community college in the U.S. notes how as in Willis's study (1977) the formation of an institutional subculture, ultimately works against Black students (1985, p.156). Cecile Wright (1985) made similar findings during her research into a British high school. She found that a group of students who move around the school together displaying characteristically exclusionist behavior such as speaking patois have in effect opted out of positive patterns of conformity, and as such, are viewed by school staff in a hostile manner.

The research carried out in Britain indicates a sense of independence among the females, as well as well as an awareness of sexism and racism. Illustrative of this is **Kathryn Riley's** (1985) research which highlighted three main points about the girls perceptions of their schooling:

> First they had firmly held and clearly articulated views on gender and sexuality. They did not consider themselves as peripheral to male Black culture, nor did they consider themselves as passive sexual objects, with little involvement in the male world.
> Secondly, they had a keen sense of political awareness and a keen sense to challenge political decisions which might restrict their future projects.
> Thirdly, they were well able to analyze their own experience of schooling.... They were also able to evaluate and use creatively the more positive aspects of their school life" (Riley 1985, p.64).

If we look at the North American context, Linda Grant's (1984-5) study of Black girls in a desegrgated U.S high school also indicates independence as a factor in the school lives of Black females. Her study highlighted that autonomy, loyalty to peers, and skepticism about adults' judgments in White-controlled schools are emphasized more by Black parents than by White parents. Grant notes that although generally compliant with teacher rules, Black females were less tied to teachers than White girls were and approached them only when they had a specific need to do so (1983, p.107). In looking at how the teacher relates to Black girls in the classroom, Grant finds that teachers rated Black girls academic performance and skills as average or slightly below average. Black girls were rated most similarly to White males, lower than White female and higher than Black males (p.101). Feedback has been shown to be an important component in student motivation, and while the Black girls in the study did receive feedback, it was the quality of that feedback which differentiated the experience between White girls and Black girls.

Black girls thus appeared more powerful and less exploited in peer networks. There was also much more reciprocal aiding between Black girls and boys than between White girls and boys.

Racism

The majority of the research suggests that racism exists, but does not state explicitly how it operates at the teacher-pupil interaction level. Studies by Carrington and Wood, and by Wright (1986) in Britain, which attempt to link racism with the teacher-pupil interaction process have been criticized by Foster (1990) on the basis that the methodology is flawed. Foster maintains that Wright's findings which show the source of racism as being in the school processes was not supported by the data from the study.

In Britain, the research suggests that West-Indians as an ethnic group are most adversely affected by racism and the nuances of teacher-pupil interaction. The debate between Paul Connolly (1992) and Peter Foster (1990) reflects disagreements highlighted in the British literature as to how and why racism operates in the schooling process. Foster suggests "it may be that the disadvantages faced by minority students in the educational system stem, not from their treatment at the hands of `racist teachers or from within-school processes which discriminate against them, but from the simple fact that they are more likely to attend...`low achieving schools' (p.170). This Weberian viewpoint is in direct contradiction to that of Gilroy (1980) and others who adopt a more Neo-Marxist stance of seeing racism in school as part of the class struggle which involves relations of power and domination. On an empirical level the **Mennonite** study **Changing Mosaic** was undertaken in Edmonton 1994. Using statistical information gathered from a questionnaire, as well as focus group interviews the report ascertained the views of a wide spectrum of immigrant youths in Edmonton. As a subgroup they canvassed the views of African youths, on how they perceived their schooling. Their findings show that African students suffer name calling and racial slurs more than other ethnic groups. Fifty-seven percent of Black students indicated that some one in school had acted towards then in a negative way because they look or sound different. The research reflects a dissatisfaction with the curriculum in the schools. The students indicated that exclusion of immigrant groups from the curriculum "denies their mainstream peers the opportunity to learn about the positive aspects of their cultures, and their contribution to Canadian, and the world history in general" (p. 31).

Edmonton Multicultural Leaders Working Sub-committee Report on Discrimination in Schools in 1993, was set up as a result of media reports of ethnically based gangs being active in the schools. Their findings acknowledge the existence of racism in schools, though not reaching any conclusion about the existence of ethnically based "gangs".

CHAPTER 3

SOURCES FOR IDENTITIES

Introduction

As part of the process of gaining access to knowledge of themselves as African Canadians many sources for identities are available. The students mentioned various types of music, films, and television programs that they experienced. These photographic, televisual, and aural images can be seen to act as sources for the spaces students occupy in their school lives. The various images offer a variety of positions which African Canadian students can fill depending on class, gender, as well as the degree of location within their family structure. All of these images and factors will affect the way that students experience their schooling. Films, music and sports provide potential sources of identity, as well as sources for the creation and reinforcement of sterotypes. Identities expressed in concrete ways via dress and style have racially constructed elements, which affect interpersonal relations with other ethnic groups in school.

Films

Films such as Menace II Society and Boyz N the Hood, which portray the nihilistic lifestyle of urban African American youths in conjunction with the violence and despair that envelops that life are well known among the students interviewed. These films give many of the students knowledge as well as a vicarious experience of life in the urban areas of the United States (U.S). Some see the urban decay portrayed as being central to Black lives while peripheral for the majority of Whites. This seems to reinforce the dichotomy of "them" and "us" by strengthening their association with Blacks in the ghetto while seeing the Whites as set apart and disinterested. The following statement illustrates this:

> Toni: It's the Black people who want to talk about it [condition of Blacks in urban areas], not the Whites, because they [Blacks] want to solve it.... It's movies like Menace II Society, Boyz N'the Hood that made people realize what's going on. (individual)

For others, viewing films such as Menace II Society was not only vicarious, but in a sense cathartic, in that viewing the conditions that exist in the U.S. results in a stronger identification with Canadian society. In an almost Durkheimien sense of social cohesiveness, it enables some African Canadians to be grateful that the society that they live in is different to that portrayed on the screen. The following comments are indicative of this:

> Menace II Society]...portrayed life like what it was in L.A. ...it's car jacking, sticking people up with guns.... Here it's totally different, so we get to see what they do, and how its different for them and us and what we could do not to be like that. (male, individual)

Many of the participants indicated an awareness not only of Blacks in America, but also of fellow Blacks in other parts of the world. For some the level of awareness had a deeper understanding and critical analysis and they were able to indicate how the economic and social conditions of Black people are often determined by their race and the dynamics of geopolitics. The following two extracts give an indication of these comments when referring to South Africa:

> They [Whites] come in rule for 200 years and then leave and say "now you rule".... Even though it's not my problem, you can't help but care." (female, individual)

> It makes me so upset that so many people had to sacrifice themselves for this day [Blacks allowed to vote in South Africa]. (female, individual)

The depth of knowledge that many of the students displayed reflects in some ways the popular icons as determined by White mainstream culture[1] as much as by Black culture[2]. By this I mean that the two Black individuals mentioned most often by those pupils who would like to know more about their history were Malcolm X and Nelson Mandela. Both these men had recently been given a lot of publicity in the mainstream media: Malcolm X via the Spike Lee film of that name, and Nelson Mandela, with the run-up to the South African elections. The students were aware that their knowledge was limited and that they relied on films and other sources for information[3]:

> If it wasn't for the movie about Malcolm X, I'd know nothing.... I read the book Roots...that's all I know. (female, individual)

> Like with Malcolm X, I didn't really know much about him, so I wanted to find out more. Now I know [after watching the film]. (individual)

> People came to our church and were asking questions about poets [and other Black people] and I didn't know much.... I know about Booker. T. Washington that's obvious stuff but not others.... My parents started teaching me but that's the only place I can get it. (male, individual)

As part of the process of using films to garner information about Black subjects, the students highlighted the fact that access to and availability of the films were often controlled by the mainstream cinema corporations. Films specifically about the Black community are only shown for a short period of time and predominantly at one location -- the Eaton Centre[4]. So we see the indirect way in which White dominant society is involved in making available to young Blacks representations of themselves, which aid in the construction of their identity. The latter relates to Stuart Hall's point that the culture of a given ethnic group is not created in a vacuum, but is often a reflection of the dominant society.

Though films which focus on the Black community provide sources of knowledge and a potential base for construction of a Black identity, often this "knowledge" is not accepted simplistic manner. A few of the male students indicated an awareness of how some movies they watched were in fact undermining the identity of Black people and portraying them as peripheral, expendable, and reliant upon the Whites [usually males] to solve their problems. As indicated by the following conversation, some students demonstrate a critical awareness of their portrayal by the mainstream film media:

Eldridge: They [films] always show that the Black man is always saved by White people. We can never save ourselves, I can't understand that. We do stuff for ourselves, but they always show the White man trying to save the Black person.
Nelson: Kung fu Joe [a Black guy] was the first one killed [in a film]. The White guy never got touched. (focus group)

Television

The provision of knowledge about Black communities as well as existing subcultures are often filtered by the media. As Hebdige suggests, "much of what finds itself encoded in subculture has already been subjected to a certain amount of handling by the media" (1979, p. 85).

Canadian television is dominated by programs developed for and by the U.S market, which tend to depict constructions of "life" in the U.S. As such television programs that the students watch have a strong impact and powerful influence on all youths. Black youths, ingest the offerings of a predominantly Eurocentric lifestyle, as well as programs attempting to portray the lives of Black families and individuals. Many of the students indicated an awareness of themselves not just as Canadians but also as Blacks. They watched Fresh Prince of Bel Air a situation comedy portraying the life of a Black family, not only because it was funny and they could relate to it, but also because it was seen as "depicting Black people in a positive way." (questionnaire)

The students mentioned re-runs of programs such as North and South and Roots which many found not only emotional, but seemed to add to and reinforce a "collective memory"[5] of being Black. As one student who watched the serial North and South stated, "she wanted to put her hand in the television set and wring the White man's neck." (individual) Part of what these programs seem to do is to give the students an inkling of what the past entailed for their forebears, as well as to provide an opportunity for them to reinforce their group identity as Black people. An example of this process is given by one student when in discussing her parents reaction to Roots indicated that "my parents have prejudice towards [White] people especially after watching Roots." (individual)

Alongside re-runs of historical serials, talk shows trawl the issue of "Black" identity and have a voyeuristic appeal to both Black and White audience as issues such as inter-racial marriages and self-identity of mixed-race individuals emerge as topics of discussion. As part of this scenario and "crossover"[6] appeal the Oprah Winfrey show was mentioned several times by the students. In affirmation of this point, a July 1994 edition of the Edmonton Journal noted the impact that the Oprah Winfrey show had on the book buying public of North America, and alluded to the number of people who watched the show and listened to the opinions that the Black host articulated. In general, the format of Oprah and other talk shows provides not only entertainment for the students, but also catalyses discussion of racial issues among friends at school. Illustrative of this was a heated debate during one interview session in which some students pitted various perspectives about a participant on a television show who was denying her Blackness and wanting to be seen as White.

News programs also act in the construction of Black identity, as they bring news of other areas of the world, as well as highlighting and promoting certain behaviour of individual Blacks as group behavior[7].

Music

Music was seen as being important to some students not only for entertainment, but because it sometimes acts as a catalyst for their social lives. It provided sources for identity, as well as indicating adherence to their racial/ ethnic origins. With the exception of students who were heavily involved in church based activities, many of the students interviewed used music as a focus for socializing outside school, and as an indirect form of "boundary maintenance"[8] for the Black group.

They listen to a wide variety of music produced predominantly by Black musicians. Soul and "rhythm & blues" were mentioned frequently by the students especially Jodecia by the young women, who indicate that the words are good and powerful. The interviews reveals how some of the Black students did not automatically relate to the type of music played on the school radio systems. In school A and school B, the interviews show individual Black students as involved in attempting to broaden the type of music played over the school intercom, to include "rythm & blues" and Rap, which were seen as appealing to the tastes of some Black students. The latter was an attempt by the students to get musical representation reflective of their cultural background. This variation in musical style was not always acceptable to its mainstream non-Black audience however:

> Bobby: For the music its pure "bala" music. They [non-Black] play like rocker music.
> Nelson: I want to hear something like r&b, or slow music. They are playing Alternative.
> Gary: I was on the radio station once every two weeks.... I played stuff like rap and r&b and people kept coming up and complaining. "How come you don't play this and you don't play that". I told them that "All the other 13 days you are getting what you want. This day is for what I want to play and hear".... Eventually the teacher started buying country cds and rock cds [thereby supporting the status quo]. (focus group, school B)

> [We got involved with the school radio because] it seemed that our music wasn't represented
> (individual, school A)

Reggae was generally popular, particularly among those with an affinity with Jamaica. One of the friendship groups established within school B was based around a reggae "sound system" that played at parties. Thus the music, friendship and school were intertwined for some students, providing a closer bond.

Rap music, and Hip-Hop culture has acquired for some of the students a signification of "roughness" and "Blackness", which is seen as reflecting the lives of young disaffected Black youths in the urban areas of the U.S. It was interesting that a similarity was perceived between "rap" and "reggae" by some students. This similarity was based not so much on the beat but more on the social content of the songs, and the style in which the lyrics were communicated to their audience. Links were made between the two musical forms by the United Kingdom's (U.K's) New Musical Express in 1979, which noted that "the deejay who raps does not appear to be a million miles removed from the ancient [Jamaican] art of toasting." The lyrics of the reggae songs are in a sense reinforcement of the views espoused by rap songs, namely the tough "gangsta" image. As Desmond indicated:

> We don't see ourselves as "bad". But everyone wants a rough gangster "look" [i.e] a serious guy who nobody wants to mess with. Everybody see him, and he'll get

respect, or "big up" as we'd say in Jamaica. A lot of Jamaican songs talk about "gangster" and "bitch" and all that. (male, individual)

This interlinking of the musical forms among Jamaicans and Blacks in the United States and to some extent Britain, is to be expected as the movement of descendants of the diaspora takes place. What we see is affirmation that culture is not static, but adapts and changes with the structure of the society that it interacts with, and encounters. Hebdige indicates such a trend when he outlines the movement made by rap D.J Kool Herc from Jamaica to the United States in 1967, and the accompanying changes in the presentation of his musical form (1987, p.139).

For some students identification with rap was based on the social content of what the rappers had to say, deepening their understanding of and empathy with the rappers and how they reacted to the despair and violence they face in their daily lives:

Toni: In the States, in the ghetto...those people rap about what they know and if you want to stop the "gangsta" rap and what they are saying then go into the projects and help!
Angela: They [rappers] are talking about people getting shot everyday, people who are their friends, their families. they grow up with helicopters flying overhead with the fear they are going to get shot. I feel so sorry for them...but they have to live like that they have to do it to survive.
Toni: It's [rap] like a window.
Angela: America doesn't like people to see it. (paired interview)

Affirmation of this aspect of rap can be seen in bell hook's comment that "[Rap] has enabled underclass Black youth to develop a critical voice...a `common literacy'. Rap projects a critical voice, explaining, demanding, urging." (1990, p.8).

Other students while agreeing that rap as critique was an accurate portrayal of the conditions in the ghetto nonetheless felt that there were negative aspects to it. For some it was seen as individuals cashing in on the plight of poor blacks in the ghettos, and often not having anything new or radical to say other than to advocate "shooting up people." (focus group, male)

The issue of role models was often discussed by the students in relation to rap. Rappers were seen as portraying negative roles for young Black men. Both males and females felt that some of the young men at school had to act tough in order to portray a "bad" or "rough" image. Some students expressed concern that in constructing an identity around rappers and characters portrayed in films, many young Black men were in fact reinforcing the negative stereotypes that already existed about them, becoming part of the process of their creation. Perhaps one of the strengths of rap's ability to attract young men, can be seen in Nelson George's comment that:

> the great thing about rap for its early audience was that it created homegrown heroes with larger-than-life persona. Shaft, Truck Turner, and Nigger Charlie were disposable Hollywood fictions. Grandmaster Flash, Afrika Bambaataa and Kurtis Blow were stars of the ghetto. (George, 1992, p. 5)

Part of the "bad" image that rap has developed has been its negative portrayal of women. Some of the young women revealed that they felt that the music was insulting and misogynist in its constant objectification of women as "hoes", and "bitches." The following conversation highlights the range and depth of comments elicited from the students:

Toni: Snoop [Doggy Dogg] is disrespectful to women by calling them bitches. I don't think they should be disrespectful to their own people when your people are being brought down by outside forces [mainstream White society].

Rosa: It's a kind of stereotype that's put on rappers they have to live up to. And White people and the Black people create it, and it becomes a fad. For them [rappers] to make their million dollars they have to go up there and cuss and bitch and shoot up. They have to live up to it; it's like a cycle that keeps going and going.

Pearl: I think that people should to be able to see a difference between reality and make - believe. Some of those things in rap is true, but that doesn't mean that you have to go out and do it. It's not everything that you see that you do.

Angela: It's our culture, the beat and the words but others make it into a fad.George: But [we have to ask ourselves] who is it that owns the records? It's the people who own the records. It's the people who are behind Snoop Doggy Dogg, that are pushing him that give rap people a bad turn. If you don't know it don't listen to it, because you won't understand .

Milton: Sometimes it's as if he [Snoop Doggy Dogg] has nothing to say. There is nothing to say other than he is going to shoot someone in the head. (focus group)

Even though these students felt that rap's message had been commodified (Kozo, 1993), or that the actual musical tempo was too slow, it was felt that rap still had the potential to teach one about oneself:

Jimmy: Most of them [rappers] make sense, you learn about stuff, talk about Black and White.... Most of them are racist though.
J.S.: When you say racist?
Jimmy: They'll sing racist songs, but that's the way they feel They probably face more than me, living in the States, with Black and White.

This charge of racism applied to rap records is based on the rappers urging violence against whites. There doesn't seem to be any adherence to the notion of racism as having the ability to assert power, and therefore dominance (Elliott & Fleras, 1992). This distinction between racism and prejudice is important and complex, and underlines the contentions as to whether Black people can be racist towards Whites[9]. In a different vein, rap can act as a potential source for cognitive dissonance for some of the students who had White family members and saw rap lyrics as advocating the killing of White people. The following comment alludes to this clearly:

> They [rappers] always talk about making a difference, kill the White people, on and on, and on.... They say White people is always prejudiced, but I notice it's us too that's prejudiced. It's not just us, like every other race is prejudiced against one race.... If we portray it in our music like that, it's just going to cause trouble. Especially saying kill all the White people, cause some of my family are White. (individual)

Linking the theme of hip-hop, and information about Black rappers in the U. S. is the magazine RapPages[10]. The magazine offers social commentary on the state of life for the Black underclass in the U. S. and cuts across gender lines in its readership. Though not purchased regularly by all the students, many of them indicated that they would scan its pages in the shops even when they did not buy it:

J.S: What about magazines?
Alice: Essence and RapPages.... Ebony, mostly Black magazines. Now it's getting easier to get hold of [them]; it was hard before. Sometimes I read it [RapPages] in the store...it has information about artists. (female, individual)

Community Sources

RapPages is an indication that Black youths have sources other than the televisual to act as sources for identity. Parents and relatives and the wider Black community emerge such sources for identity. These included a student whose parent belonged to a book club which dealt with literature about Black people, another who was involved in the activities her relatives organized as members of a Black women's group, as well as others who had joined specific Black youth organizations. Many of the students often disseminated newly acquired knowledge to other students within the school community as the following conversations indicate:

> Last year I was able to teach people stuff about Steve Biko...[but] this year it's work... school and work. (female, individual)

Kathleen: That's how Bev was saying if it was your own culture how you would work so much harder. When I did that Black history project... I sacrificed my homework...because I was so excited...involved. You feel so much better. You walk away thinking "Yeah we did this we did that." You want to brag. I would go to school and say Did you know...?" (chorus of agreement and laughter, as the rest of the group remember and agree with her comment). (focus group)

Student 1: I looked through Race and Sex [a book]
Student 2: [Don't forget] you're supposed to bring that for me [to read]
Student 1: My Dad sends away for...books that you don't see around...he'll order them from the States. (paired interview)

Within the wider Black community, churches often act as sources of knowledge, and places where a degree of autonomy can be achieved. Patricia Hill Collins makes a similar point in her analysis of the educating role that Black women have undertaken in African American churches (Collins, 1990). Churches offer alternative positions of identities for Black youth. These alternative positions often contradict those positions offered by the musical and televisual medium, prominent in Black youth culture. Ken Pryce (1979) has indicated the role that Black churches play in providing alternative identities for Black youth in Britain. He suggests that:

> The strength of the West Indian church in Britain is no doubt due to the fact that, as all -- black, self-segregating organizations based on solidarity among members, they have remained impenetrable to all attempts by the state to whitewash and subdue West Indian institutions with its policy of multiculturalism and integration. (Pryce, 1979, p. 273)

Students also made mention of attending classes on weekends organized by the Black community where they gained extra help with the official curriculum and gained acess to knowledge of history created by Blacks as a social group. Again this form of knowledge was shared with others.

Stereotypes

Stereotypes are generally a shorthand way in which we can categorize a complex array of information. "Applied to race and ethnic relations stereotypes refer to a shared consensus regarding the generalized attributes of others with respect to perceived physical or cultural characteristics" (Elliott & Fleras, 1992, p. 335). Some students indicated that seeing oneself as a group wasnot only dependent upon self ascription but also upon howone was viewed by others (Young 1993). The following comments highlight the importance of commonality of social experiences in defining what it is to be Black in a dominant White society:

J.S: What do Black people have in common?
Angela: [Our] Culture
Toni: Experiences with the White man
Angela: We've all been there.

What seems to be indicated here are the two main perspectives as to why ethnic and racial unity is maintained. Students indicate that they are often viewed by others in and out of school as Black and that they are sometimes seen in stereotypical terms. Support for this position can be found in the following statement made by a teacher:

> We have more Black kids in the school than we have ever had.... I think Black people are becoming quite visible now, and I'm not very sure its terribly positive the way that they are becoming visible. (teacher)

A few individuals within school saw them as being phenotypically alike to such an extent, that they were indistinguishable. In one school two young women outlined how on their first encounter one teacher indicated that he not only viewed them as potential "trouble makers", but also suggested that he would not be able to tell them apart, despite the fact, they looked "nothing alike." For many students this process of teachers' not being willing or able to distinguish one Black person from another can be annoying to Black students, as well as detrimental in teacher pupil interaction. Some students felt that this was a form of stereotyping, and racism. One student's account of just such an incident is an interesting example:

> We have an administrator who thinks that we all look alike. He calls all of us by the same name. I would love to see him smarten up. The other day I was walking past the office and he saw me and said that "You don't go to the school." I said how did he know, and he said "I know these things." He took me into the office, and He brought in M/s. Rubber, and said "This student doesn't go to this school." She said, "Yes he does," and I said, "Thank you," and got up and left. (Individual)

The students complained that the teachers and their fellow students had a limited knowledge about countries which were populated by people of African descent. They indicated that the two main "countries" that fellow students associated with a Black population were Jamaica or "Africa":

Lileth: They think we're all Jamaicans or African. Every Black person, that's it!
Pearl: Like when you first meet them they think that you are from Jamaica.... They say yeah, Jamaica man. [said with fake Jamaican accent] Chorus: I read that!
Grace: They feel that they have to act different towards you.... This doesn't relate to school.... Me and my sister we both had braids... We went on a plane, the Captain greets you, and he shakes hands with the passengers. And when we got on he says "Yeah man!" I mean why does he have to say it to us?
Yvonne: I think it's what they see on T.V.Grace: They feel that they have to distinguish you from everyone else.
Lileth: I was talking with this guy once and he goes to me "Are you from Jamaica?". and I said "No" and he said Africa, and I said "I am from Guyana", and he says "Aren't Guyanese people White".
Lileth: No one knows where that is?
Bev: Even Trinidad, I've people say... [where is it]
Yvonne: That's what I found different from Toronto. There are a lot more Black people in Toronto, and they [whites] know where these places are.

Lack of knowledge about other ethnic groups as outlined above was not unidirectional, and resulted in Black students being prey to the categorizations they accused others of undertaking. As Grace highlights:

> It's the same, and of course you are going to get mad, but if I see a Chinese or Japanese whatever, because we have no way of knowing. [I won't be able to tell where they come from]. So of course...[we] are going to get mad but at the same time you can see why they [non Blacks] automatically think you are from Jamaica. (group)

Some students felt that there were specific stereotypes that related to their academic potential. As one student stated:

> [We have to]...show them that Black people are not drug dealers, pimps, hoes, not just sports people, "rappers" and singers. We are people that have high intelligence. They see us as some one who can do great "slam-dunks". (focus group, male)

Several students felt that even though the teachers did not express any open animosity or direct negative verbal comments, they had to try extra hard to prove themselves in order to overcome the stereotype of Blacks as being non-academic. As Milton said:

> There are stereotypes in society. When Black people come to a class you can already feel that people think that a Black person is slack about classes, and that they'll skip and that they have been into all sorts of trouble.... Teachers have perceptions of Black people and Chinese people.... I'm sure if a Black person did the same work, that the Chinese person would automatically get a higher grade because they are Chinese and teachers expect them to be good. For Black people they [teachers] already have the assumption that they are not too bright, school is not their thing[11]. (focus group)

A prevalent stereotype in society is that Blacks have a natural ability to excel at sports. This construction especially in relation to males is one that has been attested to by various pieces of research[12]. In a Toronto high school Patrick Solomon (1987; 1994) found a dominating sports subculture among the Black males he interviewed. From the interviews and the questionnaire that some students filled out, it is obvious that they are aware of sports personalities, particularly male American sports personalities constructed by the media.

Over the past decade there has been a growth in the popularity of basketball both as a sport to participate in and a sport to watch. Among those cited as being admired, were Charles Barkley, Shaquille O'Neill, and Michael Jordan, all of whom are Black. The reasons given for admiring sports personalities tended to be because they were seen as "ruff necks" and "spoke their minds" or were of "rough appearance and didn't care what others think."

Paradoxically, among the females most chose American males as their favourite sports personalities. Flo-Joe, [Florence Kearsy Joiner] the single female sports personality chosen, reflected many of the qualities that the males were chosen for, namely, "she's a strong role model...persistent, and won many medals in the Olympics; she doesn't let anything stand in her way" (female, questionnaire). This predominance of males in female choices of sports persons admired is perhaps a reflection of the dominant exposure of Black male athletes as compared to Black female athletes in the visual media[13]. What we have therefore is a situation whereby sport stars are attractive not just because they excel at their chosen sport, and are given media exposure, but also because of their personality, and how they interact with mainstream society. Perhaps this is what Michael Dyson is alluding to when he suggests that:

> Black sports heroes transcend the narrow boundaries of specific sports activities and garnered importance as

> icons of cultural excellence, symbolic figures who embodied social possibilities of success denied to other people of color. (1993, p. 66)

Physical prowess is one of the stereotypes around which "Blackness" is constructed. This is accepted not only by mainstream society, but to a certain extent some of the Black students particularly males, seem to be part of that construction in that they also tend to see themselves as athletic, and sports as an arena in which they can excel. There seemed to be little challenge to this stereotype as a social construct and the possibility that Blacks may well excel in athletics because those are among the few opportunities readily available to them. The importance of sports to Black males was attested to by Desmond, who when discussing the effects of the education cuts applied by the Klein government in Alberta, suggested that:

> If you cut down Phys Ed a lot of Black kids are going to stop coming to school cause they got a lot of basketball talent...want to play football...[and run] track. (individual)

For schooling, the importance of the stereotype of Blacks excelling at sports is that this construct often becomes prey to the dualism of Western philosophy, where things are seen as "either or". I would suggest that this stereotype tends to reinforce the idea that physical prowess is divorced from intellectual ability. Within the education system, this duality does hold a potential reality, in that in order for the student to excel at sports, he or she has to spend time honing physical skills, time which may well be needed for more academic pursuits. One student outlined that it is not always easy to tell a sports teacher, that you would rather concentrate on your academic work than represent the school.

A teacher who supported the view that blacks were associated with sports stated when asked:

J.S.: Was there anything that Black students are noted for?
T: They get positives for being athletic but not for being good students. (teacher, individual)

What we have is a position offered to young blacks, particularly males, that has a possibility as shown by the success of other blacks who have followed this route, and also a strong affective element that gives more fulfillment than the academic curriculum. It is interesting to note that though sports activities were popular among both males and females, its articulation in their school lives was not the same for both genders. As Desmond indicated:

> [With] women its different, they are into the lawyer stuff--you never see a woman saying she want to go into the N. F. L. [National Football League]. (individual)

This gender difference in how sports was viewed as a future career may well be linked to the differing possibilities offered via media image to the different genders. Of those who were involved in clubs or organizations related to the schools the majority tended to be in sports related activities:

> A lot of us come together for track and field. (individual)

Lack of time and interest were cited as reasons for not getting involved in other school related activities. Very few were involved in structured aspects of student organizations such as the Students' Council. It is therefore no surprise that for a few students, who found the academic stress at school alienating, sports was the main attraction of school. As one such student stated in response to a question about life at school:

> [School B] is a wicked school, me like the sports program...[me no need to learn other subjects cos] me can read and write and spell. (individual)

A minority of students saw sports as a way to enhance their chances of getting scholarships. For others, the negative side of sports was that too heavy an involvement could compete with an academic career and thus fall into the trap of promoting the stereotype of the athletic Black male who doesn't excel academically.

Other stereotypes that the students mentioned related to Blacks being seen as "rough" and "bad"[14]. Some students indicated that this meant that at times other students seemed to fear them, sometimes solving this conflict by being over keen to be their friend. It should be noted that this stereotype could also be "played up" and adopted by some of the students, especially males. The stereotype of being "bad" as with many stereotypes can be seen as a dual construct. As well as engendering fear and causing others to keep their distance, it can also have the reverse effect, causing other groups to want to prove themselves physically, thus causing fights.

Style

As part of the process of stereotyping, dress and style are important aspects in its manifestations (Hebdige, 1979). The Black students school lives show how dress and style become related to their racial identity and how other react to them. U.S. Today noted in 1990 that there was a rising crossover appeal of Black fashion-twisted braids, dreadlocks, hi-top fades, L. A. Raiders gear, banana headbands, African beads, baggy clothes -- which it calls Afro-centric[15]. The emergence of this style of dressing has been linked to the sneaker, and the increased popularity of basketball, as a sport. Icons such as Black basketball player Michael Jordan, epitomized the growth in popularity of the sport as well as the basketball sneaker. Michael Dyson notes how the sneaker has become more than a shoe in the process of representing a subcultural period:

> the sneaker reflects at once the projection and stylization of Black urban realities linked in our contemporary historical moment to rap culture and the underground political economy of crack and reigns as the universal icon of cultural consumption. (1993, p. 70)

When the students were asked to describe what "dressing Black" entailed, the following interview is representative:

J.S: So what does "dressing Black" mean?

> Student: Baggy pants, high top shoes, extensions, stuff like that You mostly see them [non-Black students] in those bell foot pants. You just look and say that's Black. (School A, female, individual).

The description by the students is very reminiscent of the "Afrocentric" style described by the U.S. Today report. What is interesting about the mesh in these two perspectives is that "dressing Black" seemed to be a label that was ascribed to Black students rather than one that they consciously adopted. In other words this component of their identity is received as well as given.

Some students challenged the idea that there was a uniform way of "dressing Black." The suggestion was that many of them tended to apply their own stamp of individuality on a style of dress which had similarities. For a group of close male friends the head was often used as a site for expressing differences in style. One young man wore his hair in "circular cane rows" another in a beehive effect, one had dyed his hair, and another had tiny plaits. As one of them stated:

> We all try to be different.... It may be the same haircut [but we do different things to it]. (individual)

In conjunction with hair, headgear was also used by the group as a means of asserting difference. Often, a hat was worn on top of the bandana, adding considerable height to the head as well as circumventing the no bandana rules applied in malls[16]. The use of some of the headgear worn by the students can be seen as evidence of "bricolage,"[17] whereby the meaning of everyday objects are changed by putting them in a different context (Levi-Strauss, 1966). A male student attests to meaning being attached to specific aspects of clothing when he comments that the clothes such as the handkerchief are worn by "wiggers" (White niggers) without them knowing the full significance and the historical context from which the piece of clothing emerged. This group also had an affinity with Jamaica and as such wore various colours associated with Jamaica and Rastafarians[18]. Some of this group indicated that their style was similar to the way that they had dressed in Jamaica. For some of this group dress was seen at times as signification of Blackness. As one student who was criticized by this group indicated:

> There's the style with all the colors. [Then] there's a whole bunch of guys that dress normally, or we call normal, just jeans and boots and T. shirts. And they [other Black males] say that we have lived here too long. (male, individual)

Other students challenged the idea of them dressing in any defined way, on the basis that their tastes in dress were unconsciously acquired. For others their choice was based on what they perceived as suiting them:

> I always wear Black...you never catch me without something Black.... If [I see someone] and they look good and I think it will look good, I'll get it. (individual)

However, we can suggest that since many tastes are often determined by external influences in the form of media, peers, and marketing strategies, these choices of clothing are not "innocent." As Hebdige indicates:

> each ensemble has its place in an internal system of differences -- the conventional modes of sartorial discourse -- which form a corresponding set of socially prescribed roles and options. These choices contain a whole range of messages which are transmitted through the finely graded distinctions of a number of interlocking sets -- class status, self image and attractiveness, etc. Ultimately, if nothing else they are an expression of `normality' as opposed to deviance (i.e they are distinguished by their relative invisibility, their appropriateness, their `naturalness'). (1979, p. 101)

Though in a minority one young man admitted that he dressed consciously in order to convey a meaning as indicated by the following comment:

> Byron relates back to what he wore in Jamaica. I dress like O'Dog [a character in Menace II Society] I like to look rough. The only time we dress good is when we go to reggae parties. (individual)

One female focus group, indicated that for them dressing in what many termed a Black style of baggy clothing allowed them more freedom in their physical movement. The suggestion was that this style was more practical for school, than the preppy style of dressing favored by some White girls which involved wearing lacy blouses and platform shoes. Among the girls this casual form of dressing was seen as more appropriate to school and some indicated that they dressed very differently when they were going to a reggae party, or hall party.

Several Black students and some teachers indicated that at this particular juncture in the schema of youth culture, being Black was "cool." This may be attributable to the subcultural attraction of Black culture[19], as Koza cites David Samuels when speaking of rap's appeal to Whites" this transgressive act:

> rests in its evocation of an age-old image of blackness: a foreign sexually charged, criminal underworld against which the norms of White society are defined, and by extension, through which they may be defined. (cited in Koza, 1994, p. 191)

The above processes allow Whites to embrace the perceived "danger" of Black culture with the knowledge that they can return to White mainstream culture eventually (Hebdige 1979). The expression of this "coolness" seems to emanate from the dress and music associated with Black people. Videos that accompany most hip hop records enhance the visual portrayal of images of Black people as well as the youth culture that surrounds the alienated youths in the urban areas of the U.S. Kozo suggests that with the advent of videos and records Whites can now consume Black culture without face-face contact using Bakhtinian terminology she indicates that the "media have enabled carnival to be transformed into spectacle and this transformation alters power relations" (1994, p. 191). In a recent article in Esquire this association of Whites with perceived Black style is validated, as well as outlining its perceived threat to White mainstream American values[20].

"Black style" can be seen as an innocent aspect of youth culture, or it can be seen as a more provocative tool of posturing and intimidation. The distinction between how the style is viewed and received seems to be based on the attitude and gait that goes along with the clothes. Confirmation of this specific gait implicated in the style is indicated by the following student when questioned as to whether males had attitude[21]:

J.S.: Are young men anywhere noted for having attitude?
Paula: Attitude is for girls, but for boys its "acting tough" walking with a hip hop, "bouncing," "walking tough...." (individual)

This reference to the gait of young Black men is echoed in Hebdige's work on subcultures and Black youth. He suggests that as part of the process of offering a challenge to the dominant narrow definitions of themselves, many of the youths in his research adopted a style whereby "the very way they moved implied a new assurance -- there was more deliberate "sass," more spring, less shuffle" (Hebdige, 1979, p. 41).

As Black students come together in a group so the ability to posture increases, as does the power of signification. For Black males in particular, dressing, in conjunction with a certain gait and attitude seems to have the potential to be regarded as a form of posturing; it can indicate toughness, intimidation. The following example highlights how this process operated in one school around a particular group of young Black males:

Angela: You should have seen Clerin. He used to carry himself with so much pride. The guy had so much self-respect. He'd wear anything, he was rough...he demanded respect.

Pearl: It wasn't that he demanded it, it was there, you get it by the way you carry yourself...and they [Whites] didn't like it. They wanted **you** to bow down .

Angela: The White people-they don't like it the other way round for **them** to bow to you.

Juliet: The White boys especially didn't like it, I heard White boys in my class say, "That Clerin, [sarcastically] he thinks he's so fly, his body is all that." (Group)

Sometimes the discontent of other males with this posturing manifested itself in comments or verbal threats, for others it involved a physical challenge in the form of a fight. The following illustrates this point, and also how a distinction is made between those Blacks whose demeanor is regarded as acceptable, and those who are seen as intimidating or challenging in the way that they dress and carry themselves:

George: Intimidation is the biggest thing.... They [non-blacks] figure that we are not the same as other Black guys in the school. I hear them talking about these other Black guys.... A lot of people were saying "Look at him wear his hat to the side...." And a fight started out last year just because certain guys were dressing the way they were. Just the way they walk some guys think they are all that. They [non-blacks] don't know that person for them to start judging them. If it was Chinese guys walking with [their] hat turned to the side I don't see nobody talking about them. For some reason the Blacks stands out more than everyone else. (focus group)

In order for the gait and attitude of these groups of youths to be seen as signification, there has to be a common language of understanding. This commonality can be gained via the televisual and photographic images that all youths are exposed to even if they do not consciously relate to them. Among the interviews there are indications that "dressing Black" was perceived as being associated with youths and youth lifestyle depicted in popular films such as Menace II Society and Boyz N' the Hood:

Angela: They see Menace to Society, and they think that we are all O-Dogs [a homicidal youth]
Toni: Or in the "hood" [neighbourhood]

One student gives further illustration of how this categorization interacts with the everyday life of teens:

> Like I'm wearing a headband...and if I walk down the hallway, and if [I saw] one of those guys that didn't like it, they'd be like "You're from the hood now are you?" (individual)

The result of this association of a specific style with violent characters was that often Blacks who dressed in a similar manner even if they were not violent were sometimes seen as potentially threatening and therefore viable targets of aggression. The following extract indicates the interconnectedness of style, stereotypes and signification. This young man was involved in a violent incident that began because of how others perceived his dress and attitude:

J.S: How do people relate to the way you dress?
Eldridge: Most of the time Black people say you look good, some White people ask, "Where do you get those clothes from?" and I'll tell them.... Some White people take it too far; they say that [clothes] symbolize something ...a handkerchief symbolize a gang.... They say, "You're acting as if you are cool," and they have to prove to you that you're not too cool. (individual)

"UNDER THE GAZE"

It is not only dress and style that foregrounds many Black students, the very fact of being Black within a predominantly White society highlights their presence. Style in conjunction with stereotypes are orchestrated to oversee the way in which Black students use social spaces. For some students this was expressed as seeing themselves as highly visible and often "under the gaze" of Whites in general and figures of authority specifically.

Within school the identified figures of authority are the administrators, while out of school they are the Mall security and the police. The degree to which the students felt "under the gaze" varied according to the locations in which they found themselves and the degree of visibility that they have within a specific location. Generally students indicated that often administrators would seem to choose them from among several other ethnic or racial groups to question if they were skipping their classes. Here the students felt that the stereotype of the Black student as someone who skips comes into play. As Clara explains:

> Last year people with spares would go down to the cafeteria and play cards...so the coordinators would walk through the other groups [Chinese] to us and ask if we had a class so that they could go and check. (focus group)

Some of the Black students admitted that they did skip classes. Their concern however, was that the querying of their right as a student to be in a particular location was not uniformly applied to all ethnic groups. This perceived over-zealous monitoring of the Black students was exacerbated by the fact that the students tend to socialize in ethnic clusters when not in class. As an interesting aside, some male students ascribed a Black female teacher with the "same" traits as Whites in monitoring their behavior, and assuming that they were skipping. They suggested that she had stereotypes about them the same as the whites. This problematizes the concept of stereotypes and makes an important distinction, namely that someone who is part of a specific ethnic group, may also be prone to use of the same stereotypes about their group as the rest of society.

The mall is also a site where many of the Black students feel "under the gaze" and the reality that many high schools are in close proximity to malls, increases the likelihood of the Black students coming into dispute with mall security as to which areas of the malls they can occupy, and how they occupy those spaces. As with school, the students perceive that the mall security often seek them out as a group to ask them to move on or to remove articles of clothing such as jackets or bandanas which signify to mall staff perceived gang membership and potential violence This position is illustrated in the following comment:

Toni: You're not allowed to wear bandanas in [Wonder Mall], because they say it symbolizes gangs. (individual)

What Toni suggests is not unique to Black students; youths from other ethnic groups may also be seen as potential troublemakers by their dress or demeanor. We can suggest however, that with the Black youths, the process is one of racialization because the signs to which the mall security are responding are associated with Black youth culture, i.e. specific forms of clothing such as bandanas, and jackets.

along side the general representations in wider society of Black youth as potentially violent.

Both male and female students indicated that if they walked into a store, someone would watch or follow them to make sure they were not stealing anything. Concomitant with being "under the gaze" is the concept of feeling very visible in social situations where Whites are in the majority[22]. It is a theme echoed in sociological, and psychological literature as well as by African American novelists who explore the interaction of Blacks and Whites[23]. As a Black immigrant in France, Franz Fanon succinctly explains this alienating experience as one in which:

> ...I am being dissected under White eyes, the only real eyes. I am transfixed. Having adjusted their microtomes, they objectively cut away slices of reality. I am laid bare.... (1967, p. 82)

Though expressed differently, the students described similar feelings about social situations where they were in the minority.

Kathleen: I go out with mainly Black

Lileth: Cos you feel comfortable...they "know where you are coming from."

Kathleen: When you go to parties and stuff...when you walk in and you are the only Black person with a lot of White people, people tend to stare. Like you stand out. If you walk into a whole bunch of Black people you are integrated with everyone. You are not a big eye-sore. (focus group)

Males who move as a group and as individuals have been put under the gaze by the police. Some youths recount experiences of being stopped by the police at night, under the auspices of a being suspected of a crime[24]:

Malcolm: One time I was pretty much pissed off, I had come from a party and got dropped off and then I hear this car screech to a halt. I felt a hand and this cop putting me into this car. They kept saying, "I know you're lying...." Then they heard over the radio that they had caught the person. They didn't apologize; they just took off the cuffs and let me go. (focus group)

Bobby : One time I was walking with a Caucasian girl, and a cop pulled up ... beside me and said Are you O.K., miss? Is this guy giving any trouble to you?"

For those youths who are developing a profile with the police the interaction with law enforcers is more ongoing than the individual incidents outlined by Bobby and Malcolm. As Eldridge's interview indicated:

> Seems like the cops always want to blame everything on the Black youth....The cops are always saying to me [that] I'm in [a gang].... That's stupid cause those guys are always in jail for stupid things they do. (individual)

Blacks are made visible and invisible at the same time under the gaze. Stereotypes within society are used as the inner eyes for viewing. As Ellison (1952), states in the Invisible Man these "inner eyes...those eyes with which they look through their physical eyes upon reality." Therefore when Black youth are seen it is often with a specific gaze; eyes that see the "trouble-maker", "the skipper" "the criminal." The gaze, contains as it removes a degree of autonomy that would allow free movement. The purpose of the gaze is that it should "cow" those who come under it and make them wish to be invisible. The effect of receiving the gaze is perhaps indicted by Fanon when he states "...I slip into corners, I remain silent, I strive for anonymity, for invisibility. Look, I will accept the lot, as long as no one notices me!" (Fanon, p. 82).

If we take as our reference point, Kisteva's comment that every definition is a negation, then we should note bell hook's comment that:

> In White supremacist society, White people can safely imagine that they are invisible to Black people since the power they have historically asserted, and even now collectively assert over Black people accorded them the right to control the Black gaze. To look directly was an assertion of subjectivity, equality. Safety resides in the pretense of invisibility. (1992, p. 168)

Not all students who are put under the gaze respond by submitting and wishing to merge and become integrated into the mainstream, denuded of their difference. The latter can be seen in Hebdige's words as a:

> Refusal: it begins with a movement away from the consensus (and in Western democracies, the consensus is sacred). It is unwelcome revelation of difference which draws down upon the members of a subculture hostility, derision, `White dumb rages.' (1979, p. 132)

As with all social interaction, there is a degree of choice, perhaps in line with Foucault's analysis of power, and how individuals can make choices, even if these choices might be detrimental to their final well being.

Choosing not to submit to the gaze is as a form of resistance undertaken by some male students (Willis, 1977)[25]. Rather than submitting to the gaze, action allows Black students to accentuate their visibility, thus providing a "glare" of light to interrupt the gaze. This "glare" can be achieved by a combination of dress, walk, and attitude which is reinforced by moving in a group. For glaring to be effective, both those sending the glare and those receiving it must have some form of communication, otherwise the meaning of the interaction is lost. Stereotypes aid in this process, of achieving understanding by offering constructs which have the potential for double meaning. In School A: the stereotype at work in the interaction was that of the "uppity Black". Negative in White terminology but not necessarily accepted as so by Blacks themselves, the orchestration of this term, has the potential to undermine gaze. This process appeared to have taken place around a group of male students. As Eldridge stated:

> They look at you... the way you dress, and that stuff like that.... Black people dress different from White people...and the way we dress they always looks at us and say that we are in a gang.... It's like we walk around as friends but they take it the wrong way. We just move with the crowd. (individual)

A teacher verified this:

> We had a group of kids...and they would hang around together, almost an intimidatory.... I don't know if they were trying to intimidate other people, but just the way they were posturing was an intimidating kind of thing. (teacher school A)[26].

Seen as a form of resistance this "glaring" can be interpreted in a variety of ways by Non-Black society. It has the potential to be recognized by youths from the dominant culture as a form of resistance to Eurocentric cultural dominance, and as such intimidating. The results may well be that a dominant group will therefore apply sanctions to those interrupting the gaze. A group of Black youths in one of the schools investigated had in fact applied this strategy, with the result that other youths responded with aggression in order to smother their "glaring" and encourage them to submit to the gaze of the predominant group. Paradoxically, by resisting the dominance of the gaze of the "Other", the students in school A were in fact making themselves into one of the societal stereotypes about Black males -- being violent.

Taking the analogy further, we can perhaps see what it is like to resist assimilation into the perceived Anglo- Centric norm of Canadian society. This cuts through the notion that Canadian society is consistently pluralist, and indicates a deeper level of assimilation. An insight by one student highlights this succinctly. In response to another student's comment that Canada was a salad bowl she said that if this was so then "the Whites are the green part; they dominate everything."

DISCUSSION

Analysis of the interviews reveal a process of racialization whereby the "idea of race is introduced to define and give meaning" (Miles, 1984, p. 264) to the experiences of African Canadian students. How they experience their schooling is filtered by their race/ethnicity. This position challenges the "de jure" liberal colour blind attitude that race/ethnicity is not a significant factor in how African Canadian students experience school. "Knowing where you are coming from" emerges as a theme that relates to the process of racialization. How the students gain access to knowledge about themselves, how they mediate that knowledge, and the depth of knowledge they view others as having of them affects their perceptions of their life at school. Linked to having knowledge is an underlying theme of a "collective memory." Reminiscent of hooks (1992) we find that some students use this collective memory as a tool of consciousness in their dealings with a predominantly White society and in how they interpret knowledge of themselves. As Jonathan Arc suggests, the process of remembering can be a practice which "transforms history from a judgement on the past in the name of the present truth to a `counter-memory' that combats our current modes of truth and justice, helping us to understand and change the present by placing it in a new relation to the past" (Arc 1986 cited in hooks 1992, p. 174).

Thus we see that there are a variety of spaces that Black youths can occupy as part of their identity. Though televisual and musical forms offer possibilities for construction of identities, the process is not to be seen in a deterministic way, since other sources of knowledge are available to the students. The strength of these other knowledge sources can be powerful; as knowledge of Black history or achievement once gained by individual students is viewed in a communal sense.

Music plays a part in the formation of knowledge about the Black community in the U.S. and in the Caribbean. The content of the music is important since it often refers to the socio- economic conditions that Black people in the U.S. and the Caribbean experience. The Caribbean is seen as important, because many of the students interviewed, were of Caribbean heritage. Jamaicans in particular were well represented among those interviewed, a factor reflected in the general popularity of reggae among the students. The interviews show the tensions that exist around the issue of rap; specifically "gangsta" rap, and the issue of appropriation by White artists. For some students, rap and reggae offer an acceptable critique of White society. For others, whose family and gender locations are criticized by rappers, wholehearted acceptance is problematic.

Churches and other community organizations also act as sources for identity thus adding to the variety of spaces that Black youths can occupy. In magazines which are aimed predominantly at a White audience, issues of race, ethnicity and identity have become foci for discussion. One can suggest that this is a trend which when compounded with the highlighting of the issues on television and in music, make race, ethnicity and identity a much discussed and problematized issue. Specifically for the students, the magazine RapPages, links the themes of music and social commentary, with discussions about Black culture. Thus the students are getting access to knowledge about themselves as well as increasing the sources for their potential identities. All part of the process of "knowing where you're coming from."

Stereotypes were investigated using the focus of sports, and dress style to analyze how stereotypes are articulated within the lives of the Black students. Within both schools the primary extra curricular activity was sports. Very few were involved in decision making structures within the school. They indicated that their lack of involvement in the official student structures of the school was because there was nothing to interest them. Thus sports comes to be the main area of school participation associated with Black students. Students indicate that they are aware of the variety of negative stereotypes that exist within society. Though they indicate that many teachers do not verbalize these stereotypes, students see that as part of a wider society in which racism exists, teachers are not untainted.

The students perceived similarities in dress across Black cultures in North America and the Caribbean, with dress style being seen as originating in the U.S and Jamaica and then entering Canada via Toronto.

Style of dress plays a part in the way that Black students are perceived by others and the way in which they perceive themselves. The students do not necessarily see themselves as adopting a uniform style known as "dressing Black". Styles of dress indicate differing meanings, often ascertained from the representations of Black youth offered by the media. For some Black students dressing in a style that they identified with, was a safe act. But for some non-Black males, this style in conjunction with gait and attitude was perceived as intimidation.

Feeling under the gaze, affects the students' occupation of social spaces, and their perception of interaction with others in society. Figures of authority are seen to manipulate the gaze by use of stereotypes, such as the "skipper" or the thief. Interruption of the gaze by "glaring" while a form of resistance for the students nonetheless can lead to reinforcement of the stereotype of Black youth as violent.

Endnotes

1. White-mainstream cultures refers to the dominant, White middle class male society.

2. Jane Desmond (1994) cautions the perceived representation of Black culture as absolute. She suggests we should note Paul Gilroy's argument that we need to reconceive Black culture in terms of an Atlantic diaspora, i.e "that much of the precious political, cultural and intellectual legacy claimed by Afro-American intellectuals is in fact only partly their `ethnic property'. There are other claims to it which can be based on the structure of the Atlantic diaspora itself.

3. Julia Koza (1993) in Rap music: The cultural politics of official representation makes some interesting points on the representation of Blacks and construction of Black identity by the media. She also highlights that since about 1990 a large percentage of the "gangsta rap" consumed has been by White youths.

4. This position seems to be changing since my data was collected, as indicated by the widespread release of John Singleton's film Higher Learning January 1995.

5. "Collective memory" indicates the degree of knowledge about the position of Blacks in White dominated societies. Some students use it as a form of resistance to hegemonic control (Gramsci, 1971). As Homi K. Bhabha has suggested the obligation to forget in the name of unity is a form of "violence involved in establshing the national writ" (1990, p. 310).

6. "Crossover" is a term used in cultural literature to describe an art forms' movement in popularity across racial and social-class groups.

7. Discussion of how the news projects the actions of individuals onto a specific social group is illustrated by Duart Farquharson's article in the Edmonton Journal 26th June 1994.

8. Boundary maintenance refers to the ability of social groups to use aspects of everyday social interaction in order to maintain a separation between groups: in this case Blacks and

non-Blacks.

9. Complex to define I use racism as " the doctrine that unjustifiably asserts the superiority of one group over another on the basis of arbitrarily selected characteristics pertaining to appearance, intelligence or temperament." (Elliott & Fleras, 1992, p. 52).
Much discussion has been going on recently about whether Blacks can be racist towards Whites. I have decided to adopt a stance whereby prejudice and bigotry can be diplayed by all ethnic groups towards each other, but the term racism is more precisely applied when a relation of economic and social dominance also exists between two ethnic groups. An individual has to belong to an ethnic group that has the ability to affect the life chances of the other group to participate fully within specific areas of society. Intent does not have to be present, with racism consequences are also important (Sarup 1991) With recent theorizing around issues of power related to Foucault this definition becomes problematic.

10. Self-described as "the magazine with attitude," RapPages has articles on rappers and discussions about the state of life for Black youths. Issues such as racism, violence, and appropriation of "Hip Hop" culture are also discussed.

11. This comment is important if one bears in mind the work of Rist (1970) on the Self-fullfiling prophecy.

12. Stereotypes based on sports are prevalent in literature in Britain, the U.S.

13. The journal Women and Physical Sports outlines how women are constructed as "other" in relation to men.

14. The construction of Blacks as "rough" and "bad" can be seen in the televisual aspects discussed earlier in this chapter, and also in the discussion of style. Ref to Peter Mclaren's Multiculturalism and the Postmodern Critique (1993, p. 119-120) for his comments on the White dominated media's construction of Blacks as violent.

15. This terminology is problematic, since it is debatable that a whole community can be typified as adopting this style, and doubtful that the style can be traced directly to Africa.

16. This is my speculation concerning circumventing the rules of the mall. None of the students directly mentioned this as a form of resistance.

17. Bricolage is a term coined by Levi-Strauss. It is important to note the way that Desmond uses the idea collective memory to reinforce the present. Though he berates the "wiggers" for not knowing the historical roots of the wearing of the

handkerchief, as dating back to slavery, one wonders how many of the Black youth who wear the handkerchief also know its historical origins.
Wiggers is the term used for White who associate themselves with aspects of perceived Black culture or Blacks as a social group. Some female students were so labelled in School A, where there was indication that some White students used the term derogatively. For some Black students "wiggers" were symbolic of White appropriation. Ref also to RapPages letter in Appendix (a).

18. The data indicates that for some of this group, dressing in a way reminiscent of Jamaica was a way of maintaining a collective memory of being Black. Another male student indicated that this group saw those who dressed in more mainstream jeans and T shirt, as having "lived here too long," ie have forgotten "where they've come from."

19. hooks (1992) and Dick Hebdige make a similar point. concerning "the search for adventure and excitement... which coexist with and undercut the sober positives of mainstream society (routinization, security, etc) (1979, p.44).

20. The article outlines how so called "wiggers" have been ostracized by White students because of the way they dress. For these White students, the form of dress is recognizably Black and therefore reflective of the "Other." As one of these so called "wigger" students states in the article:

> "Some guys started saying that we're trying to dress Black and everything.... And they started calling us "wiggers", and at first they were just writing stuff on desks like `Wiggers', and `White Power' and `KKK" and a bunch of stuff.... And then they started shoving us and they started spitting on us (Esquire p, 103).

21. Attitude is seen as a tool of resistance employed mainly by females. A communicative gesture, it is made up of posture, look and often a slow "winding" of the neck.
Black males indicated that it was used against them when Black females wanted them to "get out a me face".

22. Under the gaze is a construct that I use to describe the process of controlling social spaces by the use of a gaze. Social control is not one way and as in resistance theory outlined by Willis (1979) those who come under the gaze have the ability to shift it by "glaring".

23. Refer to Richard Wright's Black Boy (1947), Richard Ellison's The Invisible Man (1952).

24. Some students saw this as the police acting on the stereotypes of Blacks youth, being law breakers. They also recalled tales of relatives who were stopped for driving expensive cars, on

the basis the students speculated, that Blacks haven't got legitimate access to money to buy expensive cars. Mention was made of incidents occurring in Toronto as well as England. Refer to Elliott & Fleras, p. 251, for a discussion of Police /Black youth relations in Toronto and Montreal.

25. Females may well express resistance to being under the gaze but it was not noted in the interviews.

26. In looking at the interviews, there is a possibility that glaring may well be taking place with those students who one teacher indicated wanted to make themselves more visible. The teacher stated that the male students seem to want to make themselves very visible in the classroom via arriving late, being loud when they arrived and generally drawing attention to themselves. I wondered if this fitted into the category of "glaring" in response to being "under the gaze" of the teacher (see p. 53). Females probably express resistance to being under the gaze but this was not evident in the interviews.

CHAPTER 4

RELATING TO PEERS: ETHNICITY AND GENDER

Introduction.

The students view of themselves and the knowledge they have of what it means to be Black, affect their relationship with other ethnic groups as well as interpersonal relationships across gender lines. As Black students, their identity partly related to the sources outlined in chapter 3 are not uniform. However, the interview data describe a racialization, of their interpersonal relationships.

The following chapter highlights the way in which the students' perception of themselves as Black is mediated in their relations with other gender and ethnic groups. Again, "knowing where you're coming from" linked to the theme of "collective memory" affects the degree and depth of social interaction that takes place between Black students and their peers. For females interviewed, "knowing where you've come from" and a sense of collective memory intertwine with patriarchal relations to support and resist attempts of male dominance in interpersonal relations. In looking at how Black students interact with others in the school environment and beyond we see that though experiences varied, there were commonalties based on assumptions and perceptions of "racial" identity.

ETHNICITY

Clustering: Organizational Aspects.

The number of Black students in an institution affects the degree of interaction between Black students and students of other ethnic groups. The interviews describe how the students' high school experiences differed from those in the junior high level. For many, high school offered the first opportunity to mix with Blacks who were not members of their church or from their immediate neighborhood.

Elementary and junior high schools which had few Black students provided a complex experience while offering the opportunity to mix socially with a variety of ethnic groups. As Barrington indicated:

> There was not that many Black people in my elementary school so I had to get along with other people. In junior high there was still a little bit more [Black student] but not that many. But it was in high school in grade 10 that you associate more. (Group)

The racial isolation of elementary and junior high meant an early school career which was peppered by racial slurs and insults[1].

George: It starts in elementary; that's where usually every person has heard the name "nigger" and you hear it so much.... Nobody really does much...cause you're just a kid. (group)

Students recalled how in elementary and junior high racial taunts resulted in Black students getting into fights. When this occurred Black students were often perceived as receiving more severe disciplinary consequences than the perpetrator. Those interviewed felt many of the latter decisions were unfair; for them physical action was a justifiable response to racial taunting:

Zora: My brother is always getting into fights over that [the word nigger].... Always my dad has to go down to the school.

Bev : I think that every Black person who has been in elementary, that's the word they grew up with that word.

Grace: My sister is in grade 8 and someone called her a "nigger" or a porch monkey or something, and my sister punched her, and my sister got suspended and I don't think she should get suspended for that.... That's verbal abuse, its the same as physical abuse.... Are you teaching her she can't stick up for herself. (group)

Students suggest that some parents shared their perspectives on how to deal with racial taunting:

> At junior high I was getting into fights...cause of people calling me nigger.... [You] go to the teacher and they don't do a thing.... When you hit them [perpetrators] back you get into trouble.... My mum went to the Principal and told him that she was the one who had told me to hit these people back. (Lorraine, paired)

The latter reveals a miscommunication between teachers and parents which has important ramifications for student -- teacher interaction. If parents tell their children that they can "stand up" for themselves when taunted, and teachers view this type of reaction as inappropriate then we have a clash of perspectives which can be detrimental to Black students[2]. Students describe how overt name calling had lessened at high school. However, they associated this decrease to the greater presence of Black students, and the recognition by non-Black students that if they persisted with taunts such as "nigger" there would be physical consequences.

Phyllis: In junior high and elementary, because the population of Black people is very low, the White kids tend to tease you a lot more...because your hair is different or something else. But I notice once you get into high school the White kids won't say anything to you; they

> give you more respect. Probably because they're afraid. (group)

The students suggest that because racism is not expressed overtly does not mean that the student population is more tolerant. Rather, their comments indicate a greater racial sophistication on the part of non-Black students in their ability to ascertain when it is socially acceptable and less physically threatening to use racial slurs. This speculation has some support in the comments made by Black students that they see racism as being present, but hidden[3]. Adrian Piper (1994) highlights this hidden aspect of race in social interaction in her article on how Whites behave differently when Blacks are not present. For some students this subtle functioning of race as a construct is potentially more damaging than overt racial hostility, because it can lead to a situation where Black students presumed a higher level of acceptance than exists:

> In New York, and L.A. they'll say get the fuck away from me I don't like you....But here...they'll say it behind your back. (focus group, male)

Toni: In the States, if you are Black they'll say so. I think that's better - cause they [White Canadians] are smiling in your face and stabbing you in your back at the same time. Lorraine: This multiculturalism thing they have in Canada is a complete joke. They [Whites] don't believe in that! (female, paired)

As well as the number of Black students in the school affecting inter-ethnic interaction, so the number of Black students in the classroom affects interaction. The students describe how within classrooms students mixed freely with other ethnic groups:

Alice: In all my classes there are not a lot of Blacks... so I am not just going to sit in my class and be all miserable [and say] "Oh you are not Black." (individual school A)

Barrington: In my class it's mostly Whites so you have to talk to them, and as long as they don't act rude to me and they don't think that they are better than me then I talk to them. (focus group school B)

Even though the interviews describe a greater degree of mixing in classrooms, the students indicate that the level of conversation is still superficial, and related to school. Milton suggests:

> [We talk about teachers and schools... the stuff you talk about is limiting. (individual)

Teachers also commented on the difference in interaction within formalized groupings such as classes and other forms of groupings which were student initiated.

J.S: Is there much clustering?
Teacher: A lot of that in the last few years. Lebanese, Black groups, Chinese, there is not a lot of mixture. The classes I have got are fairly integrated...although if they can they like to cluster. Like the Chinese would like to talk Chinese. The Lebanese would like to sit with each other. I try to move them around. (teacher, school B)

> They tend to stick together in little cliques. If you go to the cafeteria at noon, its mostly Oriental kids...and the area around my classroom. A lot of the Black kids tend to stick together, part of that is that they formed a "step" team, so that's group cohesive there.... It really depends what their interests are. A lot of the school council kids tend to be A.P [advanced placement]. students[4]. (teacher, school A)

The size of high schools as well as the number of Black students affects interaction. Large organizations tend to fragment as they allow individuals who operate within them to find meaning in their situation. Milton's analysis is revealing of how some of this fragmentation occurs:

> This high school is big you have to talk to people that have something in common with you, interested in the things you are interested in. There are different White groups...hippy White people, headbanger White people. Blacks have circles of friends...you know pretty much every Black person. (individual)

Thus one of the points of interest and experience that these students have in common is the way in which their peers perceive and react to them as "other."

Friends

Outside the classroom, within the corridors and confines of the school, where organizational constraints are not present, students have a greater degree of choice with whom they interact. Friends are "significant others" for youths at this stage of development[5]. The interviews in both schools reveal that for students male and female, common aspects were sought in a friend. Trust, and having time to listen and show concern emerge as strong necessities of long-term friendships. Despite the fact that these attributes are not possessed exclusively by one ethnic group, students choose their close friends mainly, though not exclusively though not exclusively from the Black student population. Such friends were often seen as having a perceived closer tie. Students describe this closer tie in almost "primordial" terms (Shils, 1957), suggesting that with fellow Blacks they were able to "act natural." "Acting natural" revolves around the ability to feel comfortable in the presence of another person. The students describe this comfort level as being more achievable when interacting with fellow Blacks. The following comment by Milton is illustrative of this:

> [When you're] with Whites you are always Black, they refer to your Blackness...with other Blacks you are just another person. (focus group)

Though in the minority, some students indicated that they had maintained close non-Black friends from their earlier school careers. An impetus for maintaining these friendships, were common experiences, and support for each other through difficult times. As George indicates:

George: I have one friend from then [junior high] he understands me to the fullest and he's a White guy. He doesn't act Black, he doesn't really listen much to Black music, he's into "grunge" music....
M.A: What's kept you together all these years?
George: Little kids hanging out together having snow ball fights doing little kids things, being there for me when I was getting busted for doing this and that. I was there for him. We went skateboarding together. We just did things as little kids and as you grow up you begin to have respect for those things. It's easier to be friends with somebody at that age than it is now. At our age everything is about money and it's a different aspect. (Individual)

Non-Black individuals in a cross racial friendship must also be willing to allow space for a Black friend to mix with other Black students. As Ida describes:

> We've come through rough times...she knows I have black friends. We respect each others space. She'll throw a birthday party for me and I'll throw one for her. (female, individual)

Where non-Black friends see Blacks as a separate negative group it can have consequences for the friendship. One student outlined this perspective:

> A lot of my White friends who I went to junior high with say I'm different. [They say] "You've changed, you are like all the rest, ever since you've been hanging around with them!" (individual)

Even though inter-racial friendships exist, Black students indicate that one cannot assume that racism has been eradicated from the relationship. Because someone has a Black friend does not mean that they are free of racism, and are affable towards all Black students. As Toni suggests:

> [Whites say] my best friend is Black... well you can have a Black friend and you can still see them as under you. (focus group)

"Hanging out" socially with individuals from different ethnic groups is not widespread. The interview describes this:

J.S: Do you mix with any ethnic group socially?

Lynford: Yeah, Orientals, with some of the White guys...they take me to this place called [...]. We go out to parties. When we go out to parties it's like...a mixed culture, White guys, Black guys, Orientals and so on.... And there will be a whole bunch of guys walking.... Sometimes it seems unusual, but it's not really cause that's the way things are going to turn out hopefully. (individual)

Social interaction outside the confines of school reinforced some of the ethnic boundaries found in the schools. For example, some of the churches attended by the students, have a predominantly Black congregation, and so many of the students mix with fellow Black students from school. This mixing also affected in-school friendship patterns, especially for church-going female students. As Ida expressed:

> I have friends who go to my church, people who I know before.... We stick to our own [church] cliques; we don't do a lot of things that they [non-church] do... We don't go to reggae dances, but we will still talk.... As a church group, we've grown up, we have rules and regulations and some things that we can't talk about.... So in order for me not to be tempted I keep away [from non-church cliques]. (individual)

So we find that paradoxically, while the church assisted in the maintenance of ethnic solidarity, offered spaces for identity, it was also implicated in creating differentiation within the Black community.

Hall parties[6], and reggae dances were popular places for students to socialize. These have a predominantly Black clientele, which increases its attractiveness to Black youths as a place where one can feel more comfortable, and "act natural," since people will "know where you are coming from". This "acting natural" is based on a feeling that those with whom you are socializing have something in common. Alice outlines how this common tie can change and affect high school friendship patterns.

J.S: Do you socialize [with non-Blacks] outside schools?
Alice: Not much. People from my junior high I used to, but [now it's] mainly at school.... We don't go out of our way to do anything. I guess we've grown apart since junior high. Now I go out more to hall parties. The people I socialized with in junior high are different kind of people.... Even I'm a totally different person. It just wouldn't seem right [for them to attend hall parties]. They wouldn't fit.
J.S: Is that because they are a different ethnic group, or because of their personality?
Alice: They don't like that kind of music
J.S: Your musical tastes have changed?
Alice: Well, not changed. I was into more wide a variety of music. Well now, the things I listened to before I can't stand now.
J.S: Give me an example of what you used to listen to?
Alice: I used to listen to some Alternative... it's what my friends were into.... Now I listen to mostly Soul, r&b, 70s stuff and Rap, Reggae.... I listened to all that stuff before its just that I've sort of like narrowed it down." (individual)

Many students indicated that they would not consider taking non-Blacks to hall parties, because non-Blacks might feel uncomfortable and would not know how to act[7]. Jimmy describes this process:

J.S: Would you take [a White person] to a reggae party?
Jimmy: Most of them don't want to go cause they feel uncomfortable. Cause it's mostly Blacks.... I wouldn't go to an all White party. No, it's the same thing... cause you feel left out.... Different culture and they act different.
J.S: Tell me how they act?
Jimmy: They act different, they drink and they act crazy. At a reggae party, if you drink, you go in a corner by yourself.... They like making mother jokes, well I don't like that cause I respect my mom. (individual)

Jimmy's reference to drink reflects comments by other young Blacks interviewed that alcohol plays a bigger role in the social lives of young Whites. Many perceived that for White youths having fun involved going to bush parties, and boasting about weekend drinking sprees involving "throwing up," and generally being "out of control."

The degree of racial solidarity caused by a perceived sense of discomfort are highlighted clearly in Paula's comment:

> I wouldn't go to a party with a White person, because they wouldn't like the same type of music, I might go to

> a movie. but not a party. I might go with an African. I think that if I went with a Black person that I didn't know I might have more fun than with a White person that I knew. (individual)

Though the characteristics of a friend were not peculiar to one ethnic group, most of the students interviewed described how they chose to spend their leisure time with friends from their own ethnic group. Relating this partly to aspects of youth culture such as music, someone understanding where you're coming from, they nonetheless indicated a higher level of comfort when socializing with fellow blacks.

"Hanging Together": Close Friends:

The degree of ethnic interaction by the students can be placed on a continuum whereby some had one or two non-Black students with whom they mixed, while others tended to "move" in larger ethnic specific groups. At the end of the continuum which indicated greatest ethnic solidarity were groups of males in self-designated "crews". A crew is a "clique", or group of friends, who "hang together" and "move together," both in and out of school[8]:

J.S.: What would you call a good friend?

Lester; We are always together...24 hours day and night. In between classes, lunch, after school at my place.... In school we hang out in the cafeteria.

As well as mixing together in and out of school music was also a reinforcing link among the crews. Members of both friendship crews interviewed follow a reggae sound system. Of the two crews interviewed within the research both have a base of students with a connection with Jamaica. Many of them were born there, some had visited for a period of time or had connections via their parents.

> I lived in the States for a while.... [I] left when I was 4 years old and moved to Jamaica. When I was 6 or 7, I moved here. (individual)

> All of us are Jamaican background. Its like we are all the same. I'll say something like "When I was young my mom used to hit me and go why are you crying"...and they'll say "Yeah!, yeah! [our] mom used to say that". (Everton, individual)

The crews cultural background is important in maintaining their group solidarity. Often their conversations, were related to places in Jamaica, things that happened in a certain parish, or how they were raised by their parents.

Desmond: We need a population. And [when we are in a minority] it's better we come together, then if one

> person tries to put us down we have the crew behind us. That's one of the main reasons I came here. [because of the large numbers of Blacks]
>
> J.S.: So why do you "hang out" together?
>
> Desmond: It's more educational. At least when we are together, we talk about ourselves more, than if you are with a White group. You might learn more about yourself when you hang out with your own. (individual)
>
> Malcolm: Most of the time when we sit in the cafe, he might come from Jamaica, I come from Trinidad and he might be from St Lucia. Then we talk about each others islands. It's good to bring back a little bit of the home. (focus group)

The above interview illustrates how the strength of ethnic bonds are maintained because they serve a purpose. Students are maintaining a link with knowledge of their past, they are getting affective feedback from discussing familiar aspects of their socialization process. This latter aspect applied to Black students who mixed in larger friendship groups and others who moved among different individuals. There is also an element of protection in being with a group rather than as an isolated individual. This indicates a combination of high levels of perceived interests interacting with a high proportion of alienated persons perhaps as a result of strongly felt relative deprivation (Williams, 1978, p. 59). Comments by Desmond also highlight this aspect of group ethnicity/race being more advantageous at this specific period in time for some students:

> We met each other in the mall. We were sitting and talking about all the Black people that come together. That was the time we were having the school problem with Lebanese.... A lot of Black guys were getting beaten up by Lebanese. So we said this is what we have to do. That's how I met Eldridge and Byron.
>
> J.S.: What things does your group represent?
>
> It's not that they have to have anything to join our group.... If you have a Black guy out there who is by himself...as they say a "geek" or a "nerd." We'll bring him in and let him know what's up and how to bring himself around. It's not that we have a group and we are going out to recruit. It's just there. A kid who doesn't hang around...who doesn't look like he has any friends. If we see a Black guy being beaten up by other groups or whatever then we also sometimes get involved in that too. (individual)

The two friendship crews interviewed, though maintaining strong Black male base did not seem to overtly discourage their associates from mixing with other ethnic groups. However, the interviews indicate that some friendship groups did in fact actively refrain from mixing socially with non-Blacks.

> We have one leader, and he says if you have a friend go talk to them. Don't be held back by what those [other Black] guys say. (male, individual)

> Some guys think they can go around beating up White guys. I hate no one, we just mix. (male, individual)

Ethnic background played a part in the maintenance of social cohesion of the friendship crew. They could relate to the ways of behaving and interacting that they recognized as having developed from the social structures of the Caribbean. They considered that they "knew where each other were coming from".

Fights/disputes

The two friendship crews have a "rough" image, because they are perceived as able to handle themselves. They emphasized that they do not perceive themselves as predatory, but rather, they react to aggression.

> I don't pick fights, but if anyone comes to me I'll fight them. (Individual)

The crews often referred to the ways they interacted with each other. As Lester related:

> My boys will always back me. We protect each other like brothers. No one can come and do anything to one of us and get away. If some one messes with one of us, then they are "messin" with all of us. (individual, friendship crew 2)

> We stick up for one another.... If some body try to put one of them down, we'll come back and cut you down (individual friendship crew 1).

For all the students, trust was paramount, but even more so for the friendship crews interviewed. Crew 1 who seem to interact more frequently with the police, indicate this:

> Some people talk too much, they'll sell you out. We stick to people we can trust. (Eldridge, individual)

> I know they [friends] are not going to let me down; they are not going to sell out on me.... Things have happened and they have not. (Everton, individual)

This group loyalty was often a factor in escalating disputes between the friendship crews, other groups and individuals mainly outside school. Interviews with friends in crew 1 showed that though the violence they are involved with at present involves different ethnic groups such as the Chinese or Vietnamese the initial cause of dispute may not be overtly racial. As one student indicated when explaining a feud with another ethnic group that spilled over into school:

> It's not school violence...it's something that happen with Byron and a girl.... The girl was dealing with this Vietnamese guy [he was her boyfriend] he gave her money, and she came back and spent it on Byron. He [the Vietnamese guy] found out and told his friends and they were trying to beat up Byron.... And Byron is with us, and we are ready to defend him. So all this violence started. (individual)

In both School A and B the students described the level of within school violence between ethnic groups as low. However, individuals have disputes, based on girls, or derogatory comments, which then escalates into disputes involving not only those individuals but also their friends. As group loyalty is high at this stage of youth development, and ethnic group cohesion strong so these two factors come together to give a racial edge to disputes. The disputes are not overtly racial but nonetheless racialization is occurring. Students in both schools in commenting generally on the nature of violence describe how often disputes seem to linger, as each side looks for retaliation. Disputes are less likely to be settled by a solitary fight. Interviews with School B students described how the process worked:

Grace: Everyone wants to be the roughest group, and as soon as anyone challenges that or tests that, then they have to prove themselves, it doesn't end.... Before, in junior high if someone fought with another [student] and you beat them up, fine. It's done. Now, if I was to beat her up, she'll come and get her sister after me. Then I'll come and get my Uncle after her,... and it doesn't end.
Lilieth: Someone has to come out on top.
Hazel: If you loose you have to come back and make sure that you win...
Grace: People never let a thing die, three years later, they will still be talking about it. (focus group)

Many of the fights described involve males, but interviews describe fights that have occurred between females. The students suggest that often females will fight over young men, or over gossip and "hear say." As with young men "name calling" was also a trigger for retaliation:

> A Chinese girl called [some one] "nigger" and [the Black girl] called her a "nip.".... All the girls went looking for the girl... and the Chinese girl got her relatives.... There was almost a big fight

For one of the friendship crews interviewed fights were mainly part of their out of school life. However, often their outside school lives had a strong impact on their social relations within school. As an example, two students who had been involved in fights with groups outside school, were no longer attending school, having gone "underground" according to the administrators. There was a crossover of friendship patterns between the two schools studied, with some students having moved from School A to B the previous year. Both schools recognized that the students had outside school lives but felt that their area of remit, as teachers, related primarily to those aspects of students behavior which were displayed inside the school. One administrator described most Black students as having a positive experience of school; the young Black males experiencing difficulties were seen as an insignificant minority:

> Problems that do arise... are the fringe who are not happy with their lot, not particularly with their family situation. They don't like coming to school and they like to get into mischief. (administrator)

Just as there are emotional and social advantages to being with a friendship crew, so there are also disadvantages in that close knit groups sometimes get negative recognition from the school administrators and the police. In observing the lifestyle of some of these young men who move in a friendship crew we see the reproduction of the stereotype, and the construction of young Black men as aggressive criminals. Members of this male friendship group are developing criminal records, alongside their poor academic records, which bodes ill for their post secondary careers[9].

<u>"Stepping Out"</u>

For many of the young women interviewed in both schools the `step dance' team[10] was the basis of their friendship, and their primary involvement in extra curricular activity. Seen as a Black activity popularized in the U.S. `step dancing' involves "chorally chanted rhymes punctuated with foot steps and hand claps which set up a background of rhythm" (Gilmore, 1985, p. 113). The following illustrates how stepping is equated with race/ethnic origins:

> Next year, it's going to be lots of White people want to join it. It's a shame cause now it's a Black thing. (female individual school A)

> The way I feel sometimes it's like White people do everything we do....Sometimes I want to keep things just to Black people. (female, individual school B)

Though males were involved in activities such as coaching and selecting music, stepping is regarded primarily as a female activity. It serves a dual purpose by being the focus for a Black activity, as well as reinforcing a sense of cohesiveness among many of the Black girls.

> [Step] is important to a lot of us.... It's where we can be in a group without being hassled. (female, individual)

The exception to this gender cohesiveness based on "stepping" were young women who were more deeply involved in evangelical churches. These young women had ethical objections to music being used for dancing which contradicted the values espoused in their church community.

Stepping was also a source of motivation for many students to attend school, especially when compared to the more static aspects of the formal curriculum. "Stepping" represents many aspects of what students would like to see in school work. It enables the students to work together, it's related to Black experience, it's active, and it allows the students voice in its construction and development.

Though there is a sense of group cohesiveness based on the experience of being Black women in a predominantly White society, interaction does not always go smoothly. At times individual experiences and personalities cut across this cohesiveness, with the result that at varying times a degree of tension emerges within the groups. In school A:

Lorraine: The step team is good...you have your fights but basically everyone is friends.
J.S: What do you fight about?
Lorraine: When it gets to crunch time, the pressure, we get on each others nerves...certain things people do set you off. You think "no fooling around this is the real thing" and everyone is fooling around. It just drives you up the wall. Then other people will decide to have a bit of fun to ease the tension, [and] other people want to start working. (individual)

One teacher attested to this periodic tension among the young women and indicated that often they were very vocal when an individual got "out of line".

> Girls get very upset with each other. When they get upset boy do you know it. I talk to some and they say "they all take care each other." If one of them does something stupid they let them know. (teacher school A)

This type of interaction is perhaps what bell hooks is referring to when she suggests that Black women sometimes tend to police the actions of each other (1992, p.58).

The team was regarded with pride by both Black males and

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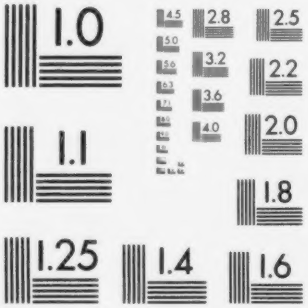
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females within the two schools. Teachers also indicated that the teams were regarded highly by the staff and non- Black pupils within the schools.

> The step team gets a lot of respect in our school most of the kids prefer the step team to the cheerleaders. (teacher school A)

> I like the concept and the team. Every slide show we make a point of having the step-team. We get them to perform whenever we can.... They are responsible and dedicated. (teacher school A)

In schools A the team was not officially recognized as a school team, mainly as a result of the team's tardiness in registering with the schools council. This lack of official status has caused various problems for the team, and some members perceived these negative episodes as indicating a lack of support from the school administration and tinges of racism:

> [T]he school doesn't support us at all... not like the cheerleaders who get their own outfits...their socks even. (individual)

The student's perceptions are interesting in light of how the teachers indicate the school regards the step-team. There is a liberal assumption by the teachers that as long as they treat everyone the same, and follow the rules they are being "fair" and equality is achieved[11]. For the students equal treatment was not equal outcome. As well as comparing their treatment with other sports groups within their school, the team also compared themselves to another step team, which was perceived as having administrative support as well as verbal recognition from their school.

Patois

For some students whose families originate from the Caribbean, the issue of being able to "act natural" was sometimes linked to the use of language. The importance of being able to maintain ones daily speech pattern is attested to by bell hooks when she states:

> To deny ourselves daily use of speech patterns that are common and familiar, that embody the unique and distinctive aspect of ourself is one of the ways we become estranged and alienated from our past. It is important for us to have as many languages on hand as we can know or learn. It is important for those of us who are Black, who speak in particular Patois as well as standard English to express ourselves in both ways. (hooks, 1989, p. 79)

The students with close familial ties with Jamaica described how Patois was used to varying degrees, among themselves. The interviews shows that most, though not all, were able to switch from standard English to Patois depending on whom they were talking. As Everton indicated when observing Desmond having a conversation with me:

> I didn't know he could talk like that (individual)
>
> We can all put on and off our Jamaican accents (individual)

Among the Black students in both schools, most with a Caribbean background could speak Patois; acquiring it from home and friends. However, many choose not to speak it in the classroom, preferring to keep it for use at home and between friends. This may be due to the social stigma once associated with Patois, whereby Jamaicans of higher socioeconomic status wrongly categorized it as a form of "bad English". Juliet indicates her choice of usage:

> When I am in the classroom I speak English [standard]. Then when they [other pupils] hear me round my Black friends talking Patois, they're like "How come you change your accent, how can you do that?! [surprised]. They think you are pretending. They think that if you're talking English in the classroom, that's the way I talk all the time. (group)

On the other hand, in school B Patois was publicly used by males when they were annoyed with a teacher, or wanted a "closed form of communication" between themselves:

J.S.: Patois, you indicated that some people [mainly boys] used it. Could you explain that a bit further and give an example?
Maya: If a teacher kicks them out of class they'll cuss
Lilieth: Say something so that the teacher can't understand them.
Maya: The guys are like that.
J.S: Is it something that they use as a group?
Pearl: Sometimes when they are talking to each other when they get together.
Grace: And when they get mad.
Lilieth: Or trying to confuse their girlfriends [laughter].

For some of the male students who like to use Patois to "cuss", one of the disadvantages of having a Black teacher who understands Patois was that he/she was able to understand what was being said. This dilutes the ability of Patois to act as a form of closed communication. The following highlights this aspect of Patois as a closed form of communication:

J.S: How do the teachers react when the boys speak Patois?

Lilieth: Mr K. reacts the others don't. He is the only one that can understand it.

Pearl: Some of the other teachers stand there and stare, what can they say, they can't understand it.... At [Parents Evening], Desmond and Ms Chalk [a teacher] and all those boys were talking, and Ms.Chalk kept saying "What?", "What?", so in the end I had to tell her what they were saying.

Lilieth: Some of the boys were talking about that and they said that it wasn't fair because Mr Board was getting on them, and if the Lebanese were swearing in their language, or the Chinese, he wouldn't know. (focus group, school B)

Although there was a great deal of cohesivenses among Black students, this was not uniform. Interviews at both schools reveal that the students were not just aware of the treatment of their own ethnic group, but also of how other ethnic groups were treated and perceived within school. Students in school A mentioned that there were sometimes splits within the Black group between those who saw themselves as Jamaican, and those who regarded themselves as African. It is uncertain as to why this was so but it underlines the position that ethnic groupings can perhaps be seen as within the general construct of race as suggested by the literature review. The interviews indicted this schism, and to some extent support for anti-essentialist arguments:

> The Africans don't like the Jamaicans and the Jamaicans don't like the Africans.... Any part of Africa, they all stay together, Somalia, Ghana. The only time they came together with us was on the soccer team. (individual school A)
>
> a Black person called an African a jungle monkey and it caused trouble (individual school A)
>
> I started hanging out with Africans [when I first came to school] then they talk about being Muslim, and [started saying] you Jamaicans this and that.... These [Jamaicans] guys is easier to relate to. (individual school A)

The interviews also reveal splits within the groupings of students of Caribbean origins. Some of the females in particular referred to the various cliques now developing and indicated that as Blacks this sense of unity had decreased. As evidence, they cited conversation with older brothers and sisters who had been through the Edmonton schooling system. As well as splits emerging as a result of geographical location in Edmonton, there were also differences in opinion among Black groups as to the degree of social interaction that should take place between Blacks and other ethnic/racial groups.

Perceptions Of Blacks As A Group In Relation To Other Ethnic Groups In School.

Unity among Blacks in and out of the school environment was an issue to which students in school A referred. Varying perspectives seem to arise here. In relation to the school context some lamented that students did not necessarily see that in order to bring about changes beneficial to Blacks as a group, they would have to act as a "group for itself" as well as a "group in itself." This means that as a group Blacks have to be able to recognize their potential as a group, and use this to further themselves as a group. Within one school an example was given of a teacher who enquired as to which languages the students would like to see in the curriculum two out of the three Black students in a specific class did not vote for the South Eastern African language of KiSwahaili[12]. A number of students perceived themselves as Black and extended this to seeing themselves as a "group for it self" who should support each other. Using the Chinese and the Japanese as examples, some of the students indicated that they would like to open up businesses which would employ mainly Blacks, as they felt that at present the talents of young Blacks were underutilized in the mainstream economy. It was felt that in order for Blacks to progress as a group unity was necessary, but that in school life, and in wider society Black students and Black adults in general did not seem willing to make a concerted effort to support specific Black projects:

Milton: Look at the Japanese people, they busted their butt... They united as a country and set out some goals...and now they come here they've beaten the whites at their own game.... They own their companies.

Bryan: The Chinese are a good example of what Black people have to do. The only reason the Chinese succeed as well as they so is because they strive.... In order to be up there and not under the White mans' power they have to succeed. They have suffered as well.... They help one another, they bring each other up in business and I think that's what Black people have to do. (focus group)

One group which some Black students mentioned as comparable to themselves in having encountered racism from White society, were First Nations students. As the following paired interview indicates, even though coached in sterotypical terms, these students see this racism as having a past which affects the present:

Lorraine: They [class] had a big discussion about Native Indians. I got into so many arguments with people. Even though they are not Black people I can understand where Natives are coming from. They [whites] come onto their land and take everything and say to them, you can have this you can have that...and this is their own land!

Toni: Yeah, you [First Nations People] can move up north where it well cold.

Lorraine: I can feel for them...and them [Whites] blaming them cause they're drunk. Who gave them alcohol in the first place.

Toni: Why is the reason they get drunk? Because they are trying to forget. (paired school A)

In School B, Jimmy indicated how his perception of the position of First Nations in society had changed his behavior.

> I did it before, call them "chugs" [but not anymore]. There is always discrimination against Natives. They are looked down upon worse than Blacks in Canada. (individual school B)

The comparison between the experiences of some First Nations students and Blacks can be seen both in and outside the school. One teacher gave his insights on links between the schooling experiences of First Nations students and Black students:

> I try to avoid [derogatory] things about Native Indians... that's another group that doesn't do well around this school. But the Blacks are following their trail...that's my perception. (teacher, individual)

The students viewed other "visible" ethnic groups as also sticking together, and spoke of "the Chinese" and "the Lebs" in stereotypical terms. The teachers attested to this and the implication for disputes:

J.S: On the basis of these ethnic groupings is there any conflict.

M/s Rubber; Up until this year I would have said no, but I've been learning about events...[at a conference] I listened to the kids talk about some of the ethnic difficulties in this school and I was surprised.

J.S: Such as?

M/s Rubber: ... fights between Chinese, Blacks, Lebanese, which I didn't know existed before....

In stereotypical terms, Chinese students were mentioned as being seen positively by the teachers as academic students; in contrast to the stereotype of the Black student. There did not seem to be many close friends from the Chinese groups. Lebanese students were seen as a problem in the past, particularly by some students who had transferred to school B. In school B some students had negative interaction with Lebanese in other schools they had attended and also indicated that the Lebanese went round in groups which were intimidating. Relations between Lebanese and the Black students interviewed in school A seemed less antagonistic, with one students stating that previously, he had thought of Lebanon "as a terrorist place" until he met some Lebanese.

Discussion

Students are aware of how they are perceived as an ethnic group as well as how other ethnic groups are evaluated both positively and negatively within and beyond the schooling system. From elementary through to high school Black students experience their social relations through their race. Some students found that negative reaction from peers was greater at elementary school because the teachers did not seem aware of name calling, or did not treat it seriously. Students who responded to taunts with physical force, were often perceived as being reprimanded more harshly. The degree of inter-racial mixing varies according to the size of Black student population. Where there were many Black students in a school, ethnic cohesion was greater. In classrooms, where there were fewer Black students there was a greater degree of mixing.

Friends play an important role in the school lives of the Black students. Some young men who were not living with parents tended to have groups of male friends, with whom they spent a considerable amount of time thus reinforcing their group identity. Aspects of social interaction related to ethnic background, such as going to hall parties, speaking Patois, or playing dominoes in the cafeteria, all added to a cohesiveness of friends. Some of the male cliques have a negative reception from other groups in society and school especially those males who had attended school A. Social constructions based on negative televisual representation of groups of Black youths as threatening aided in this process. Conversely, the young women interviewed managed to form themselves into a Black "step" group, which though used as a basis for friendship does not seem to be regarded in such a threatening manner. As females they did not meet the same degree of animosity as males. They had used the structure of the school to provide a legitimate group based on their racial/ ethnic origin, which also provided a source of motivation for coming to school.

Patois serves the function of giving some males the avenue for "closure" and resistance when interacting with non-Patois speakers, especially teachers and administrators. For female friends, Patois was used primarily among friends. As such, speaking Patois in school indicated a high level of intimacy which was seen as a necessary factor when relating to males with whom one could "act natural." On a general level, Patois reinforces group identity, and provides a link with their ethnic heritage. For some students there was a greater level of comfort when interacting with other Blacks.

This comfort level was related to the degree of knowledge that the students perceived others as having about them. This level of knowledge was seen as a common link for interaction whether this was based on musical tastes, social venues, knowledge about the Caribbean, the ability to understand Patois, or general awareness of ethnic or racial origin. Unity exists among Black students on different levels within the school population. For students who saw Blacks as a group "for itself" the issue of unity was important, for those who saw Blacks as a group "in itself," the issue of acting in unity was not as important.

GENDER RELATIONS

In gender relations the issue of knowledge surfaces in the way in which males and females interact. Both groups have stereotypes based on socially constructed knowledge about how Black females and Black males act and the meaning of this action. The stereotypes are partly constructed from the young women's interactions with significant males in their lives as well as media images in wider society. A sense of collective history and knowledge about the implications of inter-racial relations between Blacks and Whites also have an impact.

Independence

Though career choices were wide, and at various stages of actualization, many young women indicated a desire for a degree of independence in their future aspirations. Many highlighted that education was important, not only to get creditation but also that this creditation could lead to a job which would enable them to have the potential for financial independence from men should this prove necessary.

Alice: I come to get my education because I want to go far in life and I don't want to depend on nobody else to support me.
J.S.: What do you mean?
Alice: My mom always says my grandmother always said to her ...to get a good education cause if your man leaves you have to support yourself and your kids.... Its sort of something my grandmother told my mom and my mom told me. (individual)

Echoes of this "passing on" of knowledge concerning gender relations can be heard in research carried out by Dionne Brand in 1993 in Toronto. Brand suggests that generations of Black women's creativity are contained in philosophies handed down from grandmothers to mothers and grand daughters. She quotes one woman who remembers this process of handing down as:

> Every week when my grandfather gave my grandmother money for the house, she would say to me, "You see how much

> your grandfather gave me? You go to school and get an education so that no man would do this to you, you hear me girl?" (Brand, 1993, p. 231)

This theme of independence also carried over into the type of occupation that the young women wanted in the future. Many of the female students described the careers that they wanted as ones in which they had autonomy. As an example we can take note of the following interviews of young women in both schools:

> I don't want to work under anyone. I don't like people telling me what to do. (individual School B)

J.S: What do you hope for the future?
Alice: Starting a small business... I know I want to be my own boss.
J.S: Why would you like to be your own boss?
Alice: Again that independence thing...avoid confrontation that can come up with having a boss. (individual, School A)

Females especially (though not exclusively) mothers and older sisters, seem to play a role in the formation of these attitudes of independence. The following conversation between a group of females about their mothers is illustrative of this role:

Bev: They always tell you "Don't let any guy walk all over you." They sort of warn you.
Grace: They kind of guide you. One time I went to this guy's house and I cleaned it, and I got in trouble because my mom said don't ever be a housemaid to no guy. When you get out of school you are getting a job, and don't ever depend on a guy to take care of you.... At first I am like whatever [casual] but it's true; you realize that later.
Grace: That's true I've been told that so many times.... Don't ever think that you are just going to marry and live off this guy always, because you don't ever know that in the future that guy will always be there. Always have something for yourself. (focus group)

The interviews also indicated that this socialization by mothers was sometimes expressed non-verbally, as one female revealed:

> It's not even anything my mom said,... she never really says anything like that. It's just the way I was brought up, because my mom is a single mother... since I was young...and she has never had to answer to any guy.... A lot of guys find I have an attitude, because guys like to be in control.... I've never had to answer to any guy,

> [at home] so I can't take authority from guys. (focus group)

The comments by the young women, are consistent with Black feminist literature which notes that most Black girls are socialized to see themselves as needing to develop the skills that would enable them to be financially independent.
As Michelle Wallace recounts:

> I can't remember when I first learned that my family expected me to work, to be able to take care of myself when I grew up.... It had been drilled into me that the best and only sure support was self -- support. (1978, p. 89)

There is little evidence in the general literature or in my interviews which suggest that young Black girls are encouraged to rely on marriage as a means towards economic security (Fuller, 1980; Riley, 1987). Historically society has been structured so that Black males have not been in a position to take on the role of sole economic provider. Many of the young women are very aware of the advantages of maintaining a possibility for economic and career independence. Other females such as mothers and sisters seem to play a role in this process of socialization towards independence. If we refer to feminist literature we find similar narratives outlined by Dionne Brand (1993).

Relationships With Young Men

Relationships between Black males and females in school were obviously affected by the differing perceptions that each gender had of their day to day interactions. These perceptions in turn also affected the inter-racial and cross-gender interactions that take place in the lives of the students. Added to this, these constructs are played out against a background of racialization in wider society.
Because the issues raised by gender interaction were often emotional and complex issues, broad generalizations from this data would misrepresent the viewpoints of the students as well as miss the variety of nuances that help us understand how race and gender interact and intersect.

Perhaps the best way to view the data surrounding gender relations is to see it as echoing the differing "layers of potentiality" that can be ascribed to relationships.
"Layers of potentiality" indicate the various forms that a relationship can take, and the way in which it is viewed. Is it seen as long term? or is it viewed as a short term venture. For some of the young women how they perceived a more serious relationship with a young male was partly related to relationships with "significant" males in their lives. As part of this process Grace described the impact of her father on qualities she looked for in young Black males:

Grace: I was watching Oprah, and they said that most girls go for guys like their fathers, and I find that's true....My dad is like a real joker, and I find that I go for people like that and he is easy going... (focus group)

On the other hand some of the qualities displayed by significant males, are an indication of what not to look for in male partners. A decision--making process involves elimination as well as selection.

Lilieth described how the general mistrust that she felt about men could be related back to her father and her brother:

Lilieth: I think that the way I look at most guys has a lot to do with my dad...and my brother. I look at most guys as being "dogs". My dad has ten kids, my brother is always with some White girl.... [It's not been done]... consciously, but now I think about it I think [it's true].

The interviews highlight some of the traits the young women were seeking in future partners, as well as what type of relationships the young women wanted to have with young Black men. The young women describe traits, constructed around someone with whom they could have an equal relationship. This is encapsulated by the following interview:

Paula: Even if the Black girl has got money we are not the type of person who will thief up two dollars and give to a guy, because they are supposed to be taking care of us. Not giving them our money.... Mostly we want respect.... We don't want them to use that "B" word to us. Me and Joy always say that we would like to meet a guy who we could share things....but right now that seems like a dream, like something that wouldn't happen. A fantasy[13]. (individual)

Some of the young women, expressed that they did not want to dominate a relationship:

Lilieth: I seem to go for ones who are of a type.... I like a guy who can take care of himself. Well not take care of himself [not in a physical sense]. But I don't like a little pussy guy who I can say do this and do that. I don't like guys like that at all. I like a guy who doesn't take control of me but still controls himself. (focus group)

The subtle determining factors of who makes a potential partner for a stable long -- term relationship is often a reflection of the views generated at a macro and micro - level of society - both Black and White. The micro effect of the family on cross racial dating emerges in the comments of one young man about his experiences:

> [A] Black and White [relationship] would never be a happy one. She might be "down" and you might be "down" with her, but her parents will always have something to say that's mostly on the Whites' side. I was going out with this White chick and her dad told her how she should go out with people from her own race. I wasn't sweating over nothing, I just said, "O.K., cool it. Let's move on man." (focus group)

This extract highlights the role that families play in inter-racial relationships. Many students indicate that their parents did not approve of dating across race and were even less tolerant of permanent relationships. Mothers especially were indicated as having a low tolerance level, but fathers were also negative:

> My dad's got a big problem....He doesn't want no White people in the family. (individual)

The interviews show some differences in reaction to inter-racial dating where members of the family are already involved in permanent cross racial relationships. Previous experience of relationships between different ethnic or racial groups can increase tolerance, though it can also cause problems.

For some of the females having a relationship with a White young man would lead to a social existence of "limbo", being socially pressured by both Blacks and Whites. This viewpoint emerged from one female focus group in school A:

Juliet: There'd be stress... If you go to a reggae party people would be saying "ssss" [whispering] "She's with a White man...Juliet come bring White man a party." If he brings you somewhere White people are going to be "ssss" [whispering]

Pearl: I don't really care about it [social pressure] [It's] cause he wouldn't know how to dance that way, [and] I'd have to speak to him in proper English every time.

Juliet: With a Black man they already know what you are about.... But with a White man, having a Black girl would be a whole different new thing...just like all the pressure and foolishness.
J.S.: So its partly the pressure and partly because they don't know how to behave at dances?
Pearl: People can say whatever the hell what they want.... I'll go out with who I like...but just the idea that they have nothing like I have...nothing in common.
Lorraine: There's no bond.

Pearl: Maybe in a Jamaican environment.
Lorraine: Maybe a White Jamaican, White Bajan, where you can talk your language even. (group)

This interview is an indication of perspectives on dating White boys. It illustrates the importance of micro social psychological reasons such as discomfort, which is a result of a perceived lack of knowledge by White young men about Black culture, as well as macro social reasons such as societal reaction and potential rejection. This also supports comments made in chapter 3 concerning the general level of discomfort felt by students when they are in a social setting dominated by Whites.

For many of the young Black women, a relationship with young Black men offered the "potential" of developing into something more long term, mainly because they related to Black men as future partners. For some of the young Black men, even though they perceived Black women as potential future partners, they did not view their present relationships in general as necessarily "serious." The following remark made by one young male about relationships with young women may well add clarification of this point:

> They are no good, a waste of time. When you're young you're supposed to have fun. (individual)

There are indications that some young males are primarily looking for "fun" in a relationship at the moment, and that they equate a relationship with young Black women at school as hard work. For the young males "hardwork" was symbolized by young Black women showing "attitude," when they were approached as well as being more explicit in how they expected young men to behave in a relationship. As one young man stated:

> Black girls are always talking about how Black guys are rude.... All other races of girls show hospitality.... Black girls you talk to them and then they start fronting attitude....I'm not saying that for all girls, but most. Guys like girls that are easy to approach. (individual)

Attitude

Attitude was a common descriptor used by both the young men and the young women. For young women showing an attitude was viewed as a positive form of assertion, while for the young males it was regarded as being mainly negative. This difference in perception of the meaning of attitude affected the interaction between young Black males and young Black females. The following comment by a young male is perhaps illustrative of those with a negative perspective:

> The Black girls act like they are too bad for us...like

> they are so rough, like bitches. Girls think that they are so bad, no guy can tell them what to do. They are always getting attitude. (male individual)

When asked to explain what "attitude" was most females said the reason they were seen as having an "attitude" was because:

> we don't stand no foolishness,... we say what we feel, and what we think. (Clara)

Showing attitude can be seen as a form of resistance to potential male dominance in a relationship, it is a way of the young women demanding respect. As an example, one young woman indicated that a show of attitude could be triggered by a young man who she didn't know well, putting his arm around her, or calling her, and she being annoyed, and responding by "winding" * her neck and walking away. The interviews show that "attitude" can be seen as a dual construct. First, it can be used by women to let a young man know that he has annoyed her, or on a second front, attitude can be used as a matter of course; as part of ones personality rather than as a strategy for dealing with young men who actually step out of line.

Some young women saw attitude as a necessary part of their interaction with Black males; a matter of survival. As Toni states:

> If you don't have an attitude, they [young men] run you down and walk all over you. (focus group)

The trigger for showing "attitude" seems to be a perceived lack of respect shown by males. For many of the young women, respect was extremely important in any interaction that they had with young men. Showing respect during an initial exchange seems to be an important indicator of whether a relationship would get beyond initial verbal exchange. As an an example of disrespect, one woman cited how a young man trying to attract her attention shouted "Hey lips come over here!" She indicated that she found this extremely rude and disrespectful. This emphasis on respect is one that is echoed in Black feminist literature, and charted by Patricia Hill Collins (1992) in African American blues music and literature[14].

The students interviewed indicate that attitude is a trait associated with Black American women. Throughout the interview data, the young women refer to Black American men as showing more respect, and treating them well during interaction. Some of the young women admit that though these comparisons between the young men they go to school with and American men was partly based on novelty value, it nonetheless affected their perceptions of male-female interaction. Roy's comments are perceptive:

Roy: A lot of them do [have an attitude]. I think its a way to defend themselves, but some of them take it to an extreme...to fit the stereotype that all Black women have to have an attitude...from T.V. shows and stuff like that.
J.S: Is that where it comes from?
Roy: I don't know... I associate it with that. A lot of them try to compare themselves to the American women. They think that they [Black American women] have to have a lot of attitude....
J.S: Are American women seen as having attitude?
Roy: This girl was telling me if I was in the States, I'd have a lot more trouble getting Black women, cause they'd "diss" me left right and centre.... I think its just a stereotype that American women are so strong. (individual)

As well as being easy to approach, and not showing attitude many of the young men liked a degree of latitude in a relationship; the ability to interact with other young women. Many felt that the Black girls were "overprotective" in a relationship and "cussed them out" if they were observed talking to other young women.

Double Standards -- inter-racial relationships.

Though young Black males tended to choose fellow Black males as close friends, this ethnic cohesion was not maintained for cross gender relations. Some young men suggests that as a result of young Black women being assertive and "showing attitude", they are forced to have inter-racial relationships. As an example of patriarchal relations, we find that although the young Black men had relationships of varying degrees of intimacy with young women from other ethnic groups, many of these young men expressed discomfort with the idea of Black women going out with men from other ethnic groups[15]. Many stated that while they would not physically intervene in such relationships, they might verbally indicate their displeasure (Riley, 1987, p.69).

Ethnic boundary maintenance between White men and Black women, was kept by the young Black men as well as some of the young women particularly in School A. One student recalled a situation when, as a new student, she was friendly with a White young man with whom she would often chat to him. After a while one of the other Black girls stated:

> "You are attracted to too many White guys".... They are not saying that I shouldn't, they are just saying that they wouldn't. (individual)

During a focus group session the girls being interviewed indicated that they were aware that at times they took part in the process of monitoring each others behavior. Differing perspectives emerged as to the degree to which this took place.

Sula: Sometimes we do the double standard because we say "Oh we won't be going out with no White guy," and when we see a Black girl with a White guy, we sit and "cut her up"
Pearl: I don't do that.... The only way I do that is if I know she is only going out with him for sex or money.
Lorraine: If a White guy is going to go be dumb enough to give me money I'm going to take it. (group)

Perhaps part of the pressure to remain with one's ethnic group, can be explained by the comments of Lorraine that if you go with another ethnic group and if you have a dispute with someone within the group then you may well be abandoned. The young women were generally critical of the relationships that they saw the young Black men having with White girls. For some Black girls, these relationships appeared based on what young Black men could get in terms of material rewards. A few young women made a distinction between a relationship that was based on what one young female called "genuine attraction" and one based on material rewards. As Ida stated:

> It's not the inter-racial dating...it's the type of girl that they go out with..."wiggers." They [the White girls] are forward, have preconceptions about Black men, they are going to get this from them...sexual.... Our young men don't see behind their masquerade. We being the same sex we see what they are after".

Grace also alludes to the type of girls that some Black young men choose as partners:

> It's the fool White girls that get me mad....They hold their Black man like a medallion

A few young women claimed that all too often the men were ashamed of their relationship, and when questioned about a relationship, would indicate that it was the fault of the Black girls that they went out with White girls in that the Black girls had too much attitude. They described how young women from other ethnic groups, were much more approachable.

At times the young Black women see themselves as having a closer gender tie with other women over Black men. Ida's comments above are revealing in her description of how as a young woman she feels she has a better perception of the motives of White females involved in inter-racial dating. Some young Black men made similar comments when imputing motives to White males involved in inter-racial relationships. As Milton explained:

> Black girls don't like Black guys going out with White girls. All the girls see is a White girl, they don't see what the girl is like, and the same for the guys, all they see is a White guy.

The latter shows that in specific instances, gender can be seen by the students as a common basis of understanding above that of race, when issues related to gender are concerned.

Fewer Black females than males claimed to have had relationships with Whites, though some did indicate that they had non-Black males with whom they had friendly relations. Patricia Hill Collins in her essay Sexual Politics and Black Women's Relationships (1990) attempts to explain why Black women might not enter relationships with White men by suggesting that: Traditionally, freedom for Black women has meant freedom from White men, not to choose White men as lovers and friends. Black women who have willingly chosen White male friends and lovers have been severely chastised in African American communities for selling out the "race." (1990, p. 191)

The perspectives of some of the young men verified comments made by the young Black women. Some young men agreed that material rewards affected their choice of partners, but their explanation, was that the young women from other ethnic group "break them bad"[16], liked them to look well dressed, and therefore bought them clothing or other possessions. Some of the young men made a distinction between the young White women with whom they had relationships:

> There are White girls that just hang out with Black guys cause its Black guys. These are the girls that we -- look at them as indecent girls. We call them "easy going girls" You know what I mean. [But] sure there are girls that are there not because he is a Black guy but because they are a friend ... and they've got their heads straight. (individual)

Some of the females indicated that sex was seen by some of the young men as important in a relationship, and if a young woman was not willing to oblige, then they were not willing to maintain a relationship. The females in both schools in discussing this issue stressed several times that not all Black males behaved in this manner, and cautioned that it was dangerous to generalize. The following gives an insightful summation into the dynamics of gender relations and the pressure that females feel at times in embarking on a relationship.

J.S: Do you think that's what most of the relationships are

are about [sex]?
Grace. Some of them
Pearl: Most of them
Bev : Its not most of them, some of them
Grace: Not to generalize, I think a lot of the relationships with White girls are like that. Black guys and White girls. Not all but...
Hazel: That's why I got dumped.
Lilieth: I think a lot of relationships period, are like that because a lot of guys won't go for me, because of that. But some girls are like that too.
Hazel: Like, some guys [if] they get it from somewhere else, they are thinking they are going to get it from you and if you don't...it's "What's wrong?"Lilieth: If you listen to guys talk, and if one guy says he and his girlfriend has been going out for two months and nothing. [His friend will reply] "Nothing! if I was going out with her for a week she would have to...."
Grace: I remember there was this guy that I liked, and we weren't really going out yet,... and this other guy says to him "Don't go for her, you won't get none"....That's just disgusting. If that's what you are going to go out with a person for then...take your aids infected little....

The following conversation gives an idea of the views that the young men expressed and also some of the factors which they see related to why some young women were more compliant in their relationships.

Malcolm: That's the way they can keep you. There's a lot of chicks called "gangster bitches"... who try to screw every Black guy in the school.
Nelson: In Edmonton the White girls are different, maybe they're not used to having Black guys around. In other places, some of them are "facey" like the Black girls, they don't want to buy you nothing.
Bobby: Some of the girls like to see their men looking good.
Barrington: If it's a serious [relationship], then I'll tell her that there's no need to buy me to keep me. Me and you have something going on right now.

A number of the young men indicated that they would marry Black girls, even though they may go out with non- Black girls. This distinction between having a relationship with a Black girl and a White girl is illustrated by Spike:

> I wouldn't fight over a White girl; that would be dumb. But if it was a Black girl that would be a different story. If I was going out with a Black girl, and a Black guy intervened, then I might get vexed. (focus group)

Especially among those who maintained a close friendship group, there were expressions of wanting to have a "pure" Black child. This affected their interaction with non-Black girls as Jimmy indicates:

> I don't want to make the mistake of a kid, I want a full Black kid. I'm not a racist or nothing...I try to keep away from them [White girls]...but if it happen it happen. (individual)

One reason for not having children of mixed race was that they were seen as not belonging to a specific race, and were therefore the subject of teasing by other racial groups.

> I want a pure Black baby...cause guys who are half usually get cut up.... Except for half caste girls who are mostly good looking....Half-caste guys get called oreo. (individual)

> The reason I wouldn't want to have a kid with a White girl is that the kid would come up with a lot of problems.... It would want to know "Am I White, am I Black whatever?" I see it happen all the time with half-caste kids. Half-caste kids called "nigger" - on the White side "monkey" or "whitewashed" on [the] Black side. (individual)

For one student, a potential loss of culture for a child was seen as the result of inter-racial relationships. She stated that:

> [Some] fool White people, they treat their [Black] kids like a medal, they have Black kids cause it's cool.... If you are going to have Black kids, you should be aware of their culture.... (individual)

Despite the gender schism in inter-racial dating there was a strong degree of cohesiveness across gender lines in perceptions of racial dynamics in society. The young Black women showed a general concern for the social and academic welfare of the young men and saw them as suffering the same problems of racism which gave the different genders a bond[17]. Lorraine describes this:

> We [young women] have people walking all over us all the time. We don't want our own men walking all over us. they should know where we are coming from. We are on the same level. We should get respect from our men even if no-one else. (group)

Some young women describe how some young Black males have the potential to do well at school, but are failing or in lower streams.

Toni: These boys...have so much potential. What are [they doing with [their] lives.... The teachers will make subliminal comments [to them].

Other young women described the sense of alienation felt by some males, and indicated that it was not easy to just tell young men who were failing to change their ways, since the process of alienation had started earlier than high school, and was compounded by other factors they had encountered in wider society:

> Not all Black guys, growing up are so strong in their lives, they will see more hope in hoodlums running around the street than in school and education and going to University. I don't think many of them see their future as graduating at the top of their class and becoming a doctor. You can't just say Black people get into shape go to school get your act together!... by the time you get to high school you get so discouraged, and so tired. (Clara, group)

"Chatting"; putting the word about.

Gossip and labelling, seem to be used as tools for ethnic boundary maintenance. Accusations of "selling out," "White wash" and "oreo" were taken seriously by some students. This process involving the use of racial symbols affects inter-racial relations. Roy indicates how this process of name-calling works:

Roy: I mix with Blacks sometimes a Brown. I usually stick with my [Black] friends.
J.S: Why is that?
Roy: It looks better. If you go somewhere and people see you, they won't label you as "whitewash." If I saw a Black guy walking with a Lebanese guy I'll be like ...[looking]. It's better to be with your own kind.
J.S.: Is it a big thing being called "whitewash"?
Roy: That hurts...that means you don't know about yourself.

Ida articulates the stress associated with being seen as "White washed," and also indicates how one is able to act despite the name calling:

> It's acceptable not to like White people. I don't share that belief. I guess that's why I get called "whitewashed". I don't share the standards that most Black people are supposed to follow.

J.S: Who calls you whitewash?
Ida: My friends...because I have White friends, and they expect me to have just Black friends.... They find something wrong with having White friends. I guess it's a stereotype that people have of Blacks. They have to be

into sports, wear baggy clothes...a gang image. I don't follow that.

J.S: What does it feel like when they call you whitewash?

Ida: It used to offend me but now I feel sorry for them....I know I'm Black its not something I am choosing to be, I'm just being myself. If they can't accept it that's their problem.

Ida's comments though in a minority are interesting from a variety of perspectives, and indicates an anti essentialist position. As hooks states:

> Such a critique allows us to affirm multiple Black identities, varied Black experience. It also challenges colonial imperialist paradigms of Black identity which represent blackness one-dimensionally in ways that reinforce and sustain White supremacy. This discourse created the idea of the "primitive" and promoted the notion of an "authentic" experience seeing as "natural" those expressions of Black life which conformed to a pre-existing pattern or stereotype. (1992, p. 10)

Some of the students see blackness as being represented by specific ways of acting and having particular attitudes. During one group meeting, the students gave me an insight into how taking part in certain leisure activities could define you as either "Black" or "White-washed." Sula in defending a fellow student against charges of being "White- washed" indicated that:

Sula: He is the nicest guy...He does White things...going to cottages, skiing, stuff that doesn't appeal to us [Black people]....He says that he doesn't like a lot of Black people in the school because they give him attitude, because he hangs out with complete White guys.

Toni: When we see a half guy with pure White people you can't say we don't say Ah ha!.

Sula: Its wrong to stereotype him, if he's "whitewashed," it's not our problem...it's his!Toni: There will be a time [said knowingly] when he will have to face being Black. (focus group School A)

The charge of "sell out" was used against girls who had relationships with non-Black males. It seemed that females in school B participated less in this stereotyping process than did females in school A. Participants in a female focus group in School B indicate some of the pressure felt:

Yvonne: Even when I was going out with a White guy, my friends in Vancouver called me a big "diss" because to them it wasn't right.... I thought it was different when I came up here because all the Black guys were always with White girls. And I started going out with a White guy, and my friends down there...said "Why are you going out with a White guy?"

Hazel: From my Black male friends I got "dissed" they were calling me sell out and saying I am soft. "Why are you going out with a White guy"?....These two guys were asking me if I went with White guys, I said not anymore and they were saying well you are soft. And I am saying why, and they can't give me a reason. They just say that its just different [for girls].

Lilieth: There is this one guy, even if he sees you talking to a White guy, he comes up to you "Oh what are you doing checking that White guy?" You can't talk to a White guy! They [Black boys] automatically think that you are checking the guy or they come down on you cause you are talking to a White guy, when they are there talking to a White girl.

These insults need not be uttered verbally, in order for them to work effectively. As long as all the students are aware of actions which can bring about the sanctions of name-calling, then looks and gestures can be effective in controlling social interaction. The potential sanction of social isolation is also important in maintaining social cohesion within the racial/ethnic group. As Lorraine indicated, if a Black girl went out with a White boy on a serious basis, then she would "never be looked at by a Black male again." Whether this would in fact happen was not corroborated, but the perception of such consequences, was a factor in maintaining group cohesion among females.

Gossip also plays a role in gender relations. The young Black men felt that any relationship between two students at school was closely monitored not only by one's girlfriend, but also one's friends, and was susceptible to gossip.

Nelson: If you talk to other girls, they [your girlfriend] get mad, cause they think that you are checking the girl. Then they phone you up and cuss you out!

Desmond: That's the way Black girls are; they always fight for their man.

Barrington: Gossip doesn't really get outside the high school system cause my girlfriend isn't in high school, so I'm safe.

Desmond: A lot of times high school relationship between Black guys and Black girls...they [Black guys] try to stay away from that. Because you guys see each other everyday, you bound to get into argument because of rumor or something. So you try not to see her everyday, or every hour of the day.

Nelson: True! True!

Desmond: It make it worse if you are going out with a White girl in school; a lot of time the White girl expect you to be with her in a corner and your friends are watching. If you don't let it bother you, then it doesn't affect

> you. A lot of people get stared at; they don't want to be seen with a White girl.

J.S: What will happen if they do?
Bobby: You'll get called soft, or whitewash. (School B)

As well as name calling, general gossip at school also affects the interaction between students. Grace, relates that some times across the general School B population people seem to know what you have done before you have done it. The gossip revolves around stories about relationship with males, and who likes who, or doesn't like whom. Everton indicates how the process of gossip is circular and can result in conflict:

> Say I say to a girl "That guy is trying to cause trouble with me." She'll go and tell somebody and they'll tell somebody else until it gets back to that guy.... And that guy'll come and say "So you think you are bad?"...then we end up fighting.

Discussion

Name-calling and gossip act as forms of restraint on inter-racial relations. Using the construct of collective memory, intertwined with "knowing one's self" name-calling helps to reinforce Black students loyalty amd cohesiveness in socisl interaction.

The relations between the young women and the men reveal examples of patriarchy whereby some of the young Black men apply a double standard when they dealing with the issue of inter-racial dating. Some young Black men outlined that it was acceptable for them to have relationships with young women from other ethnic groups, but not for Black women. They suggest that for young Black women inter-racial relationships may well turn into something "serious" whereas they excuse their relationships as mainly short term; seeing themselves as eventually forming long term relationships with Black women.

More Black young men participated in inter-racial dating than females. The reasons for the reluctance of the young women to become involved in inter-racial dating are complex. One aspect seems to be a fear of isolation from peers, in conjunction with a feeling that culturally as young Black women, they have little in common with White young men. The female students show a sense of unity with the young Black males which crossed gender lines and was solidified by their common experience of racism, They use "we" when discussing them, and often during the interviews, the young women showed concern about the young Black mens' academic and social well being. It should also be noted that this unity was sometimes fragmented by gender, when the women saw them selves as having a common perspective on a specific issue with non -- Black females.

End notes

1. A research report on immigrant youth conducted by the Edmonton Mennonite Centre in 1994 and entitled Changing Mosaic indicates that for those of African descent, name calling had the highest level of report among the ethnic groups. With 57% reporting that they had experienced name calling "many" or "a few times".

2. Cecile Wright made similar findings concerning parents views on racial slurs in her research into Race Relations in the Primary School (1992). In corroboration of my analysis she quotes the Swann Report that the prevalence of racism was: particularly strong when [Black children] are present in relatively small numbers in school and are thus less able to be mutually supportive....(DES, 1985, p. 33)

3. This hidden aspect to racism in Canada is one that is alluded to by many authors ref to Nourbese Philip's Frontiers, 1992 which chronicles her struggle against racism in the world of the "arts." Also Stanley R. Barrett in his work Is God a Racist?

4. It's worth noting that very few of the Black students are involved in A.P programs, so this may well indicate why there are few Black students involved in the School Council. Could this be because the School Council is regarded as a pursuit for academic students. If your friends are involved does that mean that you are more likely to get involved.

5. "Significant others" are those who are important to us and whose opinions and actions affect our behavior.

6. Hall parties are organized by individuals, and information about location and which sound system is playing is usually circulated via flyers. Circulation tends to be among Blacks. Some students indicated that they found them boring in that after a while it was always the same people who came. This was often related to the small size of the Black population in Edmonton.

7. This is supported by the analysis in chapter 3 concerning "under the gaze."

8. It should be noted that these young men were a clique, not a gang, but were friends who were able to spend a great deal of time together because some of them lived on their own, or had access to friends with their own accommodation.

9. Some fellow students thought the behavior of the young men who were in cliques was detrimental to their academic progress and social well being. The data in the Gender Relations chapter gives substantiation. Also a teacher in school A alluded to

the fact that he thought the girls had attempted to "put a break" on the behavior of the males who were perceived by others as moving around the school in a posturing way.

10. Stepping involves "chorally chanted rhymes punctuated with floor steps and hand claps which set up a background of rhythm" (Gilmore, 1985). It is performed by groups of girls within the schools.

11. Many of the students in school A equated their treatment by the school as a reflection of their race / ethnic origins. One student suggested that the school did not respect a Black project, or the amount of time spent preparing for performances. The school was willing to "show them off" when it was convenient to do so but not give them official school recognition.
    This highlights misperception between the two groups, and a dilemma for the teachers who feel they should not make any extra effort to help the team.

12. This may well indicate that for Black students to choose specific curricula related to Blacks it must also have a value in the economic market to which schooling is at present tied.

13. This reveals a contradiction in how the girls react, even though they express wanting an equal relationship, they still see males as providers ie "they should be ...."

14. Patricia Hill Collins illustrates with Marita Bonner's comment that what she wants out of life is a:
    career as fixed and as calmly brilliant as the Northern star. The one real thing money buys. Time...And of course a husband you can look up to without looking down on yourself. (cited in Hill Collins 1990 p.108).

15. Refer to hooks 1992 for an interesting discussion of reconstructing Black masculinity.

16. "Break them bad" refers to the women treating them too easily, spoiling them. This fits the analysis given by some of the young Black women.

17. bell hooks explains this process as one whereby "many Black people are just as committed to racial solidarity as White people and they believe it can best be maintained by discouraging legalized union between White men and Black women." (hooks, 1981, p. 67).

CHAPTER 5

REPRESENTATION: CURRICULUM AND TEACHERS

ACTIVE/PASSIVE THE CURRICULUM AS DOMINANCE

Introduction

Using nonformal as well as informal sources highlighted in chapter three, students are made aware of specific contributions that Blacks have made to the dominant Eurocentric society[1]. The coming together of this knowledge base with the rhetoric of cultural pluralism that Canadian society perpetuates encourages the students to view the inclusion of a Black presence within the curriculum as a possibility. Knowledge of themselves in conjunction with a collective memory of White domination of Blacks enables varying degrees of critique to be made of a Eurocentric curriculum, and its attendant focus on assimilation of other perspectives.

Social Studies

In challenging the curriculum, some students indicate a general feeling of marginalization. The pinnacle of discontent for all groups of Black students was the heavy emphasis on European history in the Social Studies curriculum. Many saw this emphasis as starting in grade 11 with World War I and moving in grade 12 towards World War II.

> They say this country is multicultural [but] they don't teach any other culture except for Europe. (student school B)
>
> I can understand [why] we get into this White history, but that's all they teach us... White history. (student, focus group: school B)

Where the textbooks had content related to Black people the students felt it was often treated as marginal to the main curriculum:

> In Social, there is a part in the book about Malcolm X, but we never get to that chapter; we always skip over it. (student: school A)
>
> Social 33 has a new book. There's a special chapter on Black culture. Bam! gone. I ask "Why is this here? why aren't we learning this? You know what they say? "We don't have enough time to get to that, we have to cut for the important issues. (student, school A)
>
> It's been the issue since grade one till now; it has always been skipped out, or left behind because it's not as important. I don't understand-why is it not on those

> exam papers. [Why] is it only about Germany or Russia and Hitler? Why isn't there anything? Not even a little part of it is on Black history. (student, school A)
>
> We go into China, Vietnam War, Pakistan. When they hit Africa, there is like one page. People were slaves, they got into boats, they got killed.... That's all the knowledge area. (student: focus group school B)

Among the students there was a general perception that the social studies curriculum portrayed Black people as passive, rather than active participants in society:

Desmond: I don't like the way it's [Social] taught.... When they talk about Africa, it's either because Africa is being invaded by another country, or [about] apartheid...
Bobby: [They] talk about Mandela; they just said that he had been in prison and was now out.
Desmond: When they talk about us in social, they talk about us being in chains. They don't talk about how we got out of it what we did for ourselves.
(focus group school B:)

As Swartz (1992) has articulated, what the above approach does is to continue to "reproduce a textuality in which hierarchical relationships of power are affirmed, and in which Western, patrician, and patriarchal culture remains the master" (1992, p. 342). There were varying degrees and depth to the knowledge which the students in both schools displayed. Some of the students seemed cognizant of the general achievements of Black people with regard to their contributions to mainstream society. Others had a cursory knowledge which they wanted to increase. Both perspectives stated that knowledge about Blacks was inadequately represented in the curriculum. They echo the perspective taken by Ellen Swartz in her discussion ofthe master script in school curriculum:

> that if historically excluded "others" are presently included in standard classroom texts, albeit in very limited and constricted ways, their presence fails to address underlying issues such as purpose, cause, and consequences of events and systems such as slavery. (1992, p. 343)

Zora illustrates the perspective of those students who were more knowledgeable:

> I did a Black history project for a show case, and I was going to do Malcolm X, or Martin Luther King. Then my mom suggests "Why don't you do Canadian history? Everyone hears about them [Malcolm X and Martin Luther King] but you don't know nothing about [Canadian history]." I started reading and the stuff was incredible, like Black

> ranchers, and Amber Valley, and golf. You think of golf as a "White man's sport," [but the] golf tee was invented by a Black person. Elevators, refrigerator. The first refrigerator was invented by a Black person, but it wasn't patented. People don't acknowledge it." (focus group, school B)

Where Blacks were represented in the curriculum, the students perceived it as often in negative terms:

> Why do we have to discuss just slavery? There is a lot more...to Black culture than slavery." (student: school A)

Bobby: [They] talk about...all these little states in Africa, when they were founded, how the Dutch moved here-there and the French moved here-there but not before that.
Malcolm:.. .They [the French] invaded, but they portray...[them] as heroes...who saved these people. Nobody asked them to save us. I get pretty much pissed off. (focus group, school B)

As if to remedy the perceived lack of knowledge of Black people, students suggested that some form of Black studies should be integrated in the curriculum. The form that integration should take had varying perspectives:

Bobby: They should put something on African American studies, Pakistan studies.... A unit on each thing not just chapter after chapter on Europe. (student, focus group school B)

Yvonne: In Toronto they have Black history, but that's because they have much more of a demand. It might be too much to get in a Black course but even to put in a program or a chapter in the regular Social Studies program to teach everyone so that everyone learns it.

Grace: But still even if we had a chapter it wouldn't be... I would like a class where it was more detailed, more specified where the people who are more into it are interested to go and learn a lot more. (focus group, school B)

What is emerging here is the variability of experiences and perceptions that the students have about the purpose of broadening the access to knowledge about Black people. These perspectives in turn determine how the students see knowledge of Black people being integrated within the curriculum. Some of the students interviewed felt that Black studies would benefit White people's understanding of the contributions that had been made by Blacks to areas of society. Others reflected a psychological view reminiscent of the self- concept emphasis of the 1970s, that it would improve Black people's feelings about themselves (Milner 1983; Stones 1981).

Zora:...They only know our slavery past. They don't know anything that we have done and for that, we lose a lot of respect. If they knew everything that Black people did in history...
Grace: They would respect us a lot more.
Zora: They would understand that we have done something for them.
Hazel: We have done more than just plough the fields...

As if in support of Madan Sarup's (1992) critique of the liberal paradigm of multiculturalism, Milton suggested that "knowing more" about another ethnic group did not necessarily lead to a greater respect for that group:

> ...I'm sure people know about Blacks, but they still have their views ... that's why fights go on. [The Chinese], I know about their culture, but it hasn't affected me[2]. (individual)

Motivation was seen as a factor in a successful school career. Some of the students indicated that for themselves and for others if the curriculum was seen as relevant then motivation would improve.

June: I failed Social all this year, and I have to take it over next year, and I really don't know.... It's my fault because I never learned, or listened, but I can't be interested if all we have been talking about for the next six months is World War II.
Hazel: Napoleon, Hitler. (focus school B)

Grace: No [Black] person wants to fail Black history, because its about you.Grace: Exactly! You would be interested. That's the only thing that keeps our marks up, is when we can do stuff like that. Like in Social 30 now, we were two months into class and I swear I didn't know what they were talking about. I don't even pay attention. I have no interest. And it's not even that I am shutting it out. I can't focus, and then halfway through I start falling asleep. (focus school B)

A minority were not so certain that inclusion of a Black course would make any significant difference to student motivation to attend classes or maintain an interest in a specific subject. Milton indicated that one cannot assume that all Blacks have the same interests and perspectives:

> If it was a Chinese course, I bet every Chinese person would be signing up, but for a Black course, Black people

are separated in their views. (individual)

In line with an additive approach to the curriculum, the majority of students cited Social Studies as the most appropriate place to integrate knowledge about Black people (Sleeter, 1991). The teachers also supported this additive perspective as the following illustrates:

> With Science, there really isn't anyway to be biased about it. It's mainly activity, and it's basically Canadian based...I don't think race comes into it. [There's] more room for that in Social Studies and English. (teacher)

This perhaps reflects the way that history is compartmentalized as an area of knowledge; perceived as being concerned with acquiring facts and information. This perspective, based on knowledge as isolated units fails to reveal history as related to other aspects of social organization, and the part it plays in the construction of specific areas of knowledge as valid or not. The following extract is illustrative of the latter point as well as indicating that though the students language is one of critique, it nonetheless bears the imprint of a language of domination by Zora's reference to "Africa" as a country.

J.S: So you would see it as being in the general curriculum?
Chorus: Social.
Zora: That's the thing that I don't understand they spend million of dollars revising Social textbook, making a whole new curriculum, and they didn't even put that in there. I have done every country in Social except for Africa.... (focus group School B:)

In the following extract, Milton revealed a broader conceptualization of how areas of knowledge about Black people could be integrated in the mainstream curriculum. This broadening of knowledge about Blacks into other areas of the curriculum beyond Social Studies is not without problems however, as highlighted by Milton and George:

Milton: They could even mention it in Mathematics, some of the things that the Egyptians did. Some of the science courses it could come up.... They don't need to say this is what Black people did, but they could name some people and inventions and mention that they were Black.
George: [If] all these certain things pop up in all these different classes...some of those White people are going to say "Ah man this school is getting racist everything is Black". They don't see it from where we are coming from. The first step if we are to do something in Social is to explain why it is in Social. (focus group)

Some students in school A indicated that even though their curriculum requirements were demanding, they felt that time could be found to incorporate a Black perspective. They saw this as being accomplished by decreasing the amount of time spent on Europe. They were not totally Africentric, (Gordon, 1992, p.235) in their perspectives, and saw some value in learning about Europe. Their main complaint was the heavy emphasis on Europe, and the attendant assumption that European achievements were of paramount importance. In actualizing a curriculum, that reflected a presence other than Europe, students suggested that it should be a "serious" course, and one way to make it so would be by having it as a requirement for graduation.

For many students a history of World War II was epitomized by Hitler, as an individual, rather than some one who symbolized a specific ideology. Many failed to make a connection with a broader issue of human rights, that might have relevance to their own experiences. The following perspective offered by Bev during a focus group was in the minority:

Bev: When he [the teacher] started talking about Hilter, I got a little more interested because I am interested in Hitler.

J.S: Why are you interested in Hitler.

Bev: Because it has to do with...discrimination.Grace; How he [Hitler] treated other cultures. That's the only thing that we have done so far that acknowledges.... That interests me. I like to learn about the Holocaust and stuff like that because it may not be about Black people but its about Jews and its just another.... You don't just have to learn about Black people that are discriminated against. You have to learn about everyone and that really did interest me. (focus group)

There seems to be a difference between the two schools in the way that the student body interviewed perceived the curriculum relating to the Holocoust. In school A some students felt that as an issue it seemed to be given greater weight than the plight that Blacks had endured during slavery and beyond, as Toni indicates:

> Some people get sick of us talking about slavery, but the Jews can go no and on about the Holocaust. We have been through a Holocaust for how many hundred years, and we can't even talk about it? (focus group)

What Toni describes as a lack of recognition of the level of oppression that Black people have undergone, is accentuated when comparisons are made with how other previously oppressed groups are viewed by society. It is therefore not surprising that by school A attempting to increase their students' awareness of how one specific ethnic group has suffered oppression, they alienate another. For example a day trip to the popular movie Schindlers List can be regarded by the teachers and some students as broadening the scope of the curriculum, yet it is not necessarily perceived in those terms by all the students. The following interview indicates the perspectives that the students in school A had on the issue of some classes going to see Schindlers List.

Clara: All through Black history month it wasn't even recognized in the school. There was no announcement on Martin Luther King's birthday; nothing. But the Jewish Holocaust, it's half a day off schools... But when the movie Malcolm X was made, we didn't get any time off to go see that. It had a lot to do with history. Maybe not **their** history.

M.A: Is that why you think Schindler's List was promoted, and Malcolm X wasn't?.

Phyllis: The emphasis on education has always been on White-dominated. For them I suppose it's carrying on. It's more important in the curriculum to teach about Whites?

George: The movie Malcolm X was about his life and Schindler's List is about the way people are treated. If they make it a day trip to see Schindlers List, they should make a big trip to see the movie Roots, I see a relationship there. (focus group)

This perhaps illustrates how knowledge when divorced of its dynamic aspect may not enable students to make connections to broader societal issues (Freire, 1972). The ability to decompartmentalize knowledge is crucial if students are to be given the opportunity to see what they are learning within a broader framework.

Marginalization of knowledge about blacks is a subtle signifier that such knowledge is not as important as Eurocentric knowledge. The process at work here can be seen as similar to that being used in the categorization of people into ethnic groups; namely it allows a hierarchy to be created. Part of the control and dominance surrounding this issue, is the ability of a specific group in society to compartmentalize knowledge and thus create a hierarchy. Therefore certain types of knowledge are seen as being attributable only by a specific cultural, racial or social group. This process allows a distance to be maintained that distinguishes blacks as not part of the mainstream, but marginal: they are "Other." In reality culture is often dialectical Jane Desmond cites the work of Mintz and Price (1976) in order to emphasize the "strong influence that slavery, as an institution, exerted on both African and European derived cultural practices" (1976, p. 41). We can suggest that the different cultures impact and reflect each other (Morrison, 1993). Explanations of this process of negation of Black history and contributions are given by Martin Bernal in his set of books The Black Athena, in which he indicts nineteenth century racism as a causal factor in the erosion of knowledge As Nourbese Philip indicates: there is a growing body of White mainstream scholarship which reveals that the so-called "cradle of civilization," Greece, "significantly borrowed culturally [and] linguistically from Egypt and Phonecia." (1994, p. 218).

As the onus for educating themselves about Black issues was placed on the student, Grace and Veda indicated that it was unfair that they should spend all day learning some one else's history and then be too tired to read about history concerning themselves:

Grace: We shouldn't have to learn all our history on our own time.
Yvonne: I shouldn't have to go after school to learn about my history...They [Whites] don't have to go after school to learn their history.... I remember during Black history month you were asked to do the [presentation] thing, yeah, And you couldn't.
Grace: Yeah I didn't feel that I knew enough.
Yvonne: That's pretty down why do you have to learn about somebody else's culture if you are not getting a chance to learn yours.
Grace: I have to go home and study and study so I can pass about someone else's culture and maybe if I have five minutes before I go to sleep I can read some other book. Last year I had so much more time to read but this year I feel as though I haven't learned anything about what I want to learn. I think its shameful. (focus group)

Many of the teachers regarded the curriculum as Eurocentric especially the Social Studies, but differed on whether anything should or could be done about it. The following represents the variety of perspectives:

> It no longer reflects the cultural make-up of our students.... We should look at Asian history....Not very many students whose parents have migrated from Europe anymore, it's mainly grandparents. (teacher #1 school A)

> A typical school like this...with the dozens of ethnic representation.... We would have to make it pretty generic and flexible to be able to make it relevant.... We can't have a different perspective for every ethnic group. (teacher #2 school A)

In line with the views of some students teachers also saw inclusion of a Black perspective in the curriculum as related to the number of Black students in a school, it was not regarded as a pedagogical issue which should be tackled regardless of ethnic composition.

J.S: Is there a need [for inclusion of more on Blacks] bearing in mind what you said that they are not a large group.
M/s Rubber: Province wide, probably not and that's my own personal opinion--but as far as this school goes, because we have such as large Black community compared to other high schools I don't see any reason why it couldn't be." (teacher, school B)

The interviews describe how the students perceive some of the teachers as having little knowledge about Black people or their history or culture:

Desmond: Schools are so deprived of Black stuff that a social teacher who said that he had been teaching social for a long time [was surprised when]... I told him that the first lady in the newspaper industry was a Black lady, and he didn't know. That's something that a Social Studies teacher should know. (focus group)

English Language Arts

Related to the issue of viewing knowledge as static, is the issue of terminologies used to describe Black people in the books read as part of the English curriculum. Of particular note, the students strongly criticized the use of the term "nigger". Many stated that for them it was the equivalent of a "cuss" in their homes and that when it was used casually during class readings of novels, it made them uncomfortable. Especially if, as they often were, the sole Black student present. They felt "under the gaze,"[3] as the class would turn and look at them or slyly glance to see their reaction. Verification of this process of isolation can be seen in the following student teacher's comments cited by Deborah Britzman in her discussion of race and pedagogy.

> That year I...did a report on Gwendolyn Brooks. It had embarrassed me that of all her work we read We Real Cool, when I was the only Black person in the class. I had a very awkward feeling that all eyes were on me, that such a poem was supposed to reflect my experiences or one typical of my race (opposed to the human race). (cited in Britzman, 1991, p. 66)

Teachers had varying perspectives, on this issue. At one end of the continuum it was indicated that the term should be avoided if possible.

Mr. Pen: I try to avoid anything with "nigger" in it. I read Walkabout last year. I don't think one can be particularly comfortable with some of the novels that they have used in the past, with all this "nigger"
J.S; How do you deal with that?

Mr. Pen: Most of the kids are aware that that's improper use of language one usually points out that these terms are unacceptable now. Same as if we come across any other ethnic groups that are mentioned.

An opposing viewpoint was expressed by another teacher who saw words such as "nigger" almost as a nemesis which had to be faced. Its potency could be neutralized by overt usage and discussion, a strategy used for other words of taboo contained within the English language:

> I would appreciate it if a student says to me "The word nigger offends me" because then I'd want to know why it offends you...and then we could get to the point of letting that word go.... It's not even a word.... The word niggardly exists and that means cheap.... It doesn't apply to a group of people with Black pigmentation. It has a social impact because we give it the power to have a social impact.... I am not belittling the social impact, but it's just a word. (teacher)

The interviews show that students perceive that the context within which the term is taught concurs with the belief that the term is now neutral, and no longer has a powerful emotional impact. Yet many students indicated that there is an emotionally tinged "collective memory" surrounding the slur[1]. We can see how the meanings, attitudes, outlooks and predispositions that people bring to bear on the situations they encounter (as well as the situations themselves) have a history, that is to say, they are the outcome of a `historical run of experience' (Mead, 1934a; Blumer & Dusteer, 1980).

Not all students passively accepted the use of the term in their classrooms and during their school careers. Those who challenged the use of the slur and voiced their objections were sometimes met with sanctions. As the following conversation indicates, it was an issue whose perception was diametrically opposed to those of some teachers:

Hazel: I didn't want to read To Kill a Mocking Bird, because there was too much racial tension [in the book] and being one of three Black kids in the class I felt out of place reading this thing, and she [the teacher] will be reading this word "nigger" like it was no big deal.... I was supposed to write a journal through a White person's eyes...and she is basically racist at the beginning, and I'm like "How am I supposed to write through a White persons eyes when I am not White?" So she said "Oh, just try" and I said "What about that word [nigger]?" and she just said "Oh well, put it down, it's no big deal." And I told her, "I refuse to do it," so she failed me.

Grace: They don't know how that makes us feel.
June: When I was in junior high, I had to read...The Cay, I am going through the book flipping through the page [thinking] its got to get better.... This little White kid is bossing around this...I swear, he should have just cuffed him one. Anyways I gave the book to my teacher I just put it on her desk [I was only in grade 7]. I said "I'm not reading this." She said "Well come on-if you want a mark, you will read this."
Grace : I was taught as a child that [nigger] is a swear.... If anyone says that to you that's like a cuss.... They [Whites] say it so easily like any other word. Now I can say it a little easier, but I choke.
June: Exactly. I told her "I'm not reading it", and she said "Well you either read it or you fail."... I put down the book and told her I wasn't going to read it, and she tried to suspend me. So my mother came out and cussed her out!.
Chorus: Ah [said with recognition and admiration] mom! (focus group)

In continuing the impact of a "collective memory" theme, some students indicate that their classmates think that the past should not be of significance to present day interaction. While this may seem an egalitarian statement, it misses the fact that much of our present day realities in relation to race have not in fact eschewed their racial past. The students show that they link their past with their present as the conversation indicates:

Maya: They (non-Blacks) always say "Why should you guys be mad at us for what our ancestors did?"
Grace: They are doing that same thing now only its not as noticeable and you can't see it as easily.
Zora: When they say that, [I say], "But we're still paying for the image that our ancestors have, we are still paying for that slavery image.... We are still linked to that history, but yet they want to totally forget about theirs. (focus group, females school B)

An interesting anomaly surrounds the use of the word "nigger" in that it is used by some "rappers" such as Ice T, on their records. Along side this some Black youths address each other in a comradely way as "niggers". One of the teachers noted this anomaly and when informed that Black students were generally uncomfortable with the use of literature which used the word "nigger" he questioned if the Black students could adopt two different standpoints on the issue whereby it was Okay for them to use the slur but not others. Among the students there were a variety of perspectives asto whether or not the word should be used at all and if itshould be used in public among non-Whites who were not clos e friends. The following interview indicates some of the perspectives among the students:

Bryan: Some people think that "nigger" is something to joke about, well it's not.
George: I think there is a positive term on the word "nigger". Me and my friends used to say to each other shut up "nigger" in front of each other, and one of us said that we shouldn't be saying that word out in public.... What we have done is taken something that the White person has called us, and harmed us and made it into a positive thing.

Among those who used the term, a distinction in usage was often made between students who were friends and those who were not. The basis for allowing usage of the word seems to be that the person using it should know the context of the words' development. As Desmond and Gary indicate, when asked:

M.A: What's the difference between using "nigger" among ourselves rather than in the classroom?
Desmond: When Ice T says it he knows where its coming from, But White people don't know where its coming from.
Gary: I have some White friends and they can do that to me [call me nigger], and I don't have a problem, but it's when people who comes up to me and says it as if they really mean it towards me.
M.A: Would there be a context in which it would be acceptable?
Malcolm: If they were talking about Black people and how they are called, if its in there when they are talking about the life of Black people. Not just out of the blue, like "nigger come here bring me some food".

Other students were not so sure that the term could be reclaimed:

Rosa: We call ourselves [niggers]. I don't think even rappers should be able to use [it]. "Oh what's up nigger?"... they used it in Boyz N Hood.
Juliet: I don't think they should use it cause of how long we fought to get rid of it.
Georgia: [But] we should stop taking that word to heart so much.... You know how when you take things to heart people say Uh Huh that bothers them lets do it some more
Juliet: That was in the past, we are not "niggers" anymore.
Lorraine: We never were "niggers!".

Thus it seems that attempts by marginalized groups to reclaim a term that has been used against them is not always possible. The reason for this is that society as well as the group reclaiming a term is involved in the process. Non-Black society still uses the term derogatively, even though its use is no longer socially acceptable within some groups in society. The adoption of the word "nigger" might be seen as parallel to a reclaiming of the word Black as undertaken in the 1960s. However I would suggest that the process is different in that Black did not have the specific degree of racial slur attached as "nigger."

Curriculum as process: Pupil motivation and teaching style

As well as content, process is also of importance when dealing with a curriculum that reflects different ethic groups (Darder, 1991; Fine, 1987). Black students experience this process in a similar way to their non-Black peers. Whereas the administrators see pedagogy as:

> A lot of it is experiential, we are teaching process as opposed to content. (administrator)

Some students perceive the process in a different way.

> I know I don't really have to be there [school]. I just read the book and study. I don't learn anything from my teacher. (individual)

The implication of the comments made by the student is that the educational process reinforces the view of the general curriculum as boring, and requiring passivity. Grace outlines this process and indicates why she prefers the structure of certain lessons over others: The classes I love are the ones that I get to debate, say your opinion.... Not these classes where you have to sit there and listen to the teachers and if you talk you are in trouble.... Classes should be more participation from the students.... [Sometimes] It's like listening to this dictator up there, and you can't say nothing. (focus group)

The passivity of some lessons described by Grace indicates a sense of alienation in the classic Marxian sense. The students are very much "objects" rather than "subjects" in the learning process (Sarup, 1978). As Freire suggests:

> A teaching style which relies on banking knowledge, inhibits creativity, and domesticates the intentionality of consciousness by isolating consciousness from the world, thereby denying men [women] their onotological and historical vocation of becoming more human." (1972, p. 382)

The importance of this sense of alienation felt by the students is that it can be a contributory factor in "skipping." If a student feels that they do not have to be in the classroom in order to gain the necessary information to pass an exam then "skipping" classes becomes a much more realistic option[5]. For some students classroom life involves using notes to study, taking exams and having the ability to "converge" on the "right" answer (Guiliford, 1967).

In making comparison between classes which they like and those which they did not like, the emphasis is on discussion, activity and choice. In those classes where discussions were undertaken, many students indicated that it was not only a way of sharing ideas with peers but their interest levels were much higher (Slavin, 1982). Barrington describes which process of learning he prefers:

> Group assignments, because you can...interact with people...you can do that after school you can go to their place. They can help you out, everybody has ideas.... I had fun with my group, cause they were "smarts," and help me out and I got good marks. (focus group)

Among the students interviewed, verbal skills were important in their daily interactions. Friendship groups indicated that they spent a lot of time talking about a variety of issues. The importance of verbal skills in friendship groups, was highlighted by the fact that the individuals who had prominent roles within friendship groups such as "crews," were often individuals who were seen as possessing good verbal skills. As Lynford describes:

Lynford: We look to [...] as the leader, it's not that he can fight or anything. It's that he knows how to talk and he can get us out of trouble when we get into trouble.
J.S: What sort of trouble?
Lynford: Like when we don't want to fight we'll talk our way out of it.... (individual)

As such, in-class discussions were popular with many students because it gave them a chance to be able to integrate a part of themselves into the curriculum. Knowledge was no longer conceived as free of subjectivities; it validated their experience. This is not to say however that the process of discussions were unproblematic. As with all social situations that involve personal and emotional aspects, a conflict in perspectives during discussions could at times prove isolating for students. Shaka indicates that he was regarded negatively by some of his classmates during discussion sessions for requesting to have more on Black history:

> Last year, I had a teacher for Social, and I said let's do something about Black people and he got mad at me. And all these people [classmates] were saying I hate teachers...and that I am a racist because I asked for a class on Black stuff. (focus group)

Project work provided students in general with an element of choice within the curriculum, but particularly for some of the Black students, it provided an opportunity to carry out projects related to Black peoples and cultures. As Zora and Grace indicate in their interview, it is left up to the student to highlight their ethnic perspective:

Zora: You have to do it on your own.
Grace: Right away you have to. In biology we have to choose a disease project, and right away I chose sickle cell anemia.

What the above describes is a degree of flexibility within the curriculum whereby learning is not based purely on the absorption of "facts". This perspective allows a broader view of knowledge, and offers students the opportunity to influence a Eurocentric curriculum, with knowledge related to their ethnic group. Though not all students availed themselves of this opportunity, those who were sensitive to the curriculum's dominant European focus, found it a useful strategy.

In line with their analysis that other histories were marginalized in the curriculum, were several comments from students that a First Nations perspective should be part of the Social Studies curriculum, and that what existed at present was inadequate. This point is highlighted by comments from the focus group in School B:

Hazel: I like it [the curriculum] in my Social class, [grade 10] because we don't have anything about World War I. We have learned about the legal system, and the level of government. We learned about human rights and Native Canadians. I didn't mind learning about them because this was their land first.
Grace. I think that we have a right to learn about that.
Zora: But even that's not taught properly.
J.S: How did you find that way of learning better?
Hazel: Well it didn't apply just to a White man's system. The legal system applies to everybody. And I learned about them [First Nations]. (focus group)

As well as a perspective on First Nations peoples, the interview also illustrates, that when a thematic approach is used in teaching, it enables links to be made between what may seem at first to be disparate groups within a society. The students and teachers perceptions of the negative educational experiences that First Nations students encounter in some Canadian high schools is not groundless, as indicated by Peggy Wilson's (1991) her ethnographic research on a Canadian high school.

"Dreaming the future"

The role for the student is to come to class and "receive" what the teacher has to offer. Successful academic careers are dependent on the student's ability to "receive" as well as their ability to use projected reasoning and see how the "school knowledge" presently bound in creditation by the teacher can be of long term personal value[6]. There is a strong pattern among students that they come to school primarily for academic qualification that it will bestow to those who can stay the course. The prime source of pressure towards attendance was parental; many students describe how their parents had warned them that if they dropped out of high school, they would have to leave home. For some males, the reasons indicated for attending school seemed to revolve around relatives whom they regarded as negative role models. These relatives and friends had often "screwed around" or wasted time at school and later in life were not able to survive financially. Some also felt the pressure to provide a good role model for younger siblings. As young Black men they had to ensure a good education if they were to be successful in the "White mans country." As Malcolm stated:

> My dad says this is the White man's country and as a Black man you have to get an education. If you want to have a good life, [and] you have no education, you can't get a job. You have no power to say whatever; [you are] just like another statistic. (focus)

In line with some of their non-Black peers, the viewing of education as purely instrumental undermined students own appreciation of the value of knowledge and education. As one student attested "If you have an education, no one can take it away from you." Very little initial indication was given that education was perceived valuable in itself. The following conversation illustrates this point:

Michelle: [You come to school to] get an education so that you can move onto post secondary school, so you can get a job.Grace: It's really sad, that shouldn't be the only reason Lilieth: Yes, but its inbred into us nowadays, that if you don't have an education, you are nothing.

Grace: I know...but it's sad that we have to sit here and say the only reason I am coming here is because I have to. You should be able to come to school to have fun too. (focus group)

The issue of gaining credentials seems to be the main reason for many of the students coming to school. Once they are in school many of them find differing coping strategies to survive what is for some an irrelevant and alienating process. Among the strategies that give a sense of purpose is an emphasis on friendship groups, as indicated earlier, which help to pass the time away for some of the students.

The ability to use projected reasoning and see long term consequences of today's actions has been attested to by social theorists such as Basil Bernstein. This seems to be a factor of distinction between those students who see school as offering rewards for their future lives, and those who see school as not offering skills related to their future needs.

Some students said they were able to use long term goals of a future career in order to motivate themselves to return to classes even where they had been failing. Two students indicate how this process of "dreaming a future" helped to get them back into studying at school:

Lynford: Last year, I hardly attended school.... I wanted to be a [youth worker] but without my school marks, I can't do that. They [admitting authority] say they don't care if I did lots of volunteering or not.
J.S: So why were you skipping?
Lynford: I was new to high school and all my friends were "lets do this lets do that." We'd never go to class and they [the teachers] never called home. (individual, male)

Mark: First year I didn't really care I took easy subjects like band. Last two years I thought how am I going to get into anywhere with band, so I went and did my chemistry and stuff like that. (group, male)

In support of this viewpoint, a counselor indicated similar perspectives as to the importance of projected reasoning for a successful student:

> Working with students who are not motivated is probably one of the most challenging jobs that we have as counselors in the schooling system.... "How do you turn that around to help students see that during the schooling years what they do, will have an important impact on their future.... Sometimes that's tough to do.... [They are] not tying the fact that education can lead to opportunity. That's tough to do. (counselor, school A)

Ironically it was a member of a friendship "crew" who encouraged one of the above students to attend classes regularly, even though he himself was not a regular school attender. The importance of friends as counselors is a point reinforced throughout the interviews, whereby many of the students indicated that they spoke to friends rather than counselors if they were having, emotional or educational problems. As Lester states:

> You don't go to the teacher for problems, you go to your friends. (individual)

This course of action did not seem to emanate from a specific dislike of a counselor, but was related more to an assessment that friends would have a better understanding of ones situation.

Though being able to use projected reasoning and see the future economic value of an education is important in motivating students to attend school: it is not enough. An almost equal factor of importance is that there has to be a possibility of achieving this long-term goal, before a student will subscribe to its validity. How students perceive the progress of their school career therefore becomes extremely important. Marks are often seen by both teachers and students as the primary indicator of ability, student worth, and the general progress of a school career. This process of categorizing and grading in conjunction with other factors such as family circumstances and peer pressure can have a dampening effect on the attendance patterns of students. Some students indicated this phenomena, when they reported that a dip in their marks, affected how they perceived the value of attending a particular course. As students see their grades starting to fall in a particular course so their expectation of passing that course starts to diminish, and along with it their enthusiasm. Students were aware of this decrease in their level of motivation, but at times felt that they were either too far behind with their work to catch up, or that the teacher would respond negatively to a request to help them catch up. As Grace and Lilieth indicate:

Lilieth: I don't like asking my teacher for help.... He said "You guys aren't listening." He was talking about another group [of students] and he said, "You guys are going to come to me after class and say you don't understand it." So I feel that when I go to a teacher and say that I don't understand what [they] did, they are going to start yelling at me that I wasn't listening.

Grace: Sometimes you get so far behind...that you need some help from the beginning and they say, "What! you don't understand all that stuff from way back there?"... It just makes you feel dumb. (focus group school B)

Lorraine indicates that for her to approach a teacher about work that she has missed often involves her showing a degree of remorse, which she is unwilling to do:

> Say I miss something, I'll go back and ask them for the work...[the teacher will act like] "Why should I give you the work, you were absent from this class". What am I supposed to do? If someone won't give me the work. I'm not going to get on my hands and knees, "Oh please give me the work." I ask them nicely once, and if they can't take it, forget it! Even though it might bring my marks down. (individual)

This reluctance to approach the teacher was not widespread however, and varied from teacher to teacher. Some students indicated that not only were teachers willing to be approached, but many did so outside of their designated teaching hours. Grace indicates two dimensions of this aspect of teacher pupil relationship:

> In Chemistry I was doing bad, and I asked my teacher if he could help me and he said "I wasn't planning on staying after school". It's like their day job, they don't care.... Another teacher, she will help me at lunch time, and she is not getting paid for that. (focus group, School B)

For Grace and other students the willingness of the teacher to give them individual help outside the classroom was seen as caring. In other words being willing to view them as individuals rather than as a mass to which the label of student is ascribed. As Gary and Paul suggest:

> Gary: I have a few teachers, who really try to help. If I'm in the cafeteria a teacher will walk by and come back and see if I need help. (focus group)
> Paul: I have an English teacher, who is always there for me if I have problems with punctuations. (focus group, School B)

As a social process, teaching involves personal and emotional investment in time and energy on the part of both the teacher and the pupil. Therefore the teacher can see his or her self-worth reflected in the marks that the student acquires, which can affect their interaction with recalcitrant students. As Lieberman and Miller (1991) indicate:

> By doing well on a test, sharing a confidence, performing a task indicating an interest and reporting the efforts of a teacher's influence, students let teachers know that they are doing a good job and are appreciated. Unlike other professionals who look to colleagues and supervisors for such feedback, teachers turn to children. (Lieberman & Miller cited in Taylor & Runte, 1995, p. 120)

Therefore students who are seen by the teacher as not working can be regarded as undermining her or his personal ability to perform their roles. This was alluded to by Lorraine who indicated that part of the good students role, was enabling the teacher to display them proudly:

> They'll [the teachers] take a couple of smart ones and show them off...because it's like I taught them this and I taught them that. Even though it might be that they taught themselves. (individual, school A)

Many of the students were aware of the characteristics of a good pupil, to which they ascribed traits such as "inquisitive," "attentive," "attends regularly," "answer questions," and "uses both sides of one's brain." Some claimed that they were already good students, while others felt that in concert with the other things happening in their lives it was not feasible to fulfil the role totally. George gives an insight into this process of realizing what is needed but not feeling able to achieve it:

> I know the ones to make you a good student, but I don't have any, [such as] being a keener...going to see them [teachers] in tutorials. I know some students live and die for school, man...and it shows in their marks, but I can't do that. When you see those people in the library...they really work in class and they study all the time at home. Obviously they're working enough to get those marks, but me myself, when school is done, that's enough for me. I can't stand school that much because I can't relate to any of it. I seriously can't grasp anything that I feel good with...certain things just don't turn my crank.... I sit in class, I listen, I take notes. (focus group, school A)

Some of the main reasons mentioned, by young men in particular, as to why they were unable totally to fulfil the good student role were related to lack of time and energy. Aspects such as part-time work, responsibilities of living on one's own, socializing with friends until the early hours of the morning or the premature duties of fatherhood affected the students' abilities to give the time and energy needed to be a "keener". Such feelings are highlighted in the following:

> Sometimes I get average [grades]...I'm tired.... When I'm tired, I'd be wanting to do half of the things I'm supposed to do. (individual, male)

Some students were philosophical about how to fulfil the role of the good student, and saw it as encompassing not only the ability to work hard, but also the ability to have fun, to be able to relate to others, to be sociable. The following is illustrative of this:

Gary: I want to be able to do at least two - three hours straight; for some reason right now I can't do it [laughter]. They're working from four o'clock until ten at night, no eating, just do that. And their marks are like in the nineties, [and they are] going onto University and Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (N.A.I.T).

Barrington: They don't have no social life though. A good student has a social life, it may be...sport...[but] they don't concentrate on one thing.

Everard: It's the people who work straight, who end up in Alberta Hospital [a psychiatric hospital]...nervous breakdown, cause they concentrate on the work, cause if they make one little mistake, then it's the end of the world and they start going crazy.

> Barrington: They have no social skills. I think that most people [employers] are looking for people that are smart, but they have to have social skills. They won't [necessarily] get that job. They may know more about it, but you will be able to interact with the other people so you will have a better chance of getting it. (focus group, school B)

The teachers are often aware of this heavy emphasis on academic success, which is fueled to a certain extent by Alberta Education, the Universities and other post-secondary institutions. Often there is a strong economic rational expounded by the business community and the politicians[7]. Students such as Desmond are also aware of the stress on abstract academic subjects in the education system, in contrast to other areas of knowledge. He suggests that the curriculum had little relevance for many of the Black students with whom he associated. For him, the process of creditation was tied to one specific type of "smarts" which could only be gained by attending schooling. In this way knowledge gained outside of school was negated. Getting "school smarts" was seen as the only way of making progress in the job market. He suggested that in Jamaica, (where he had lived) one could learn "street smarts" as an alternative to just "school smarts."

> Desmond: [I'd] rather [my] kids grew up in Jamaica cause they get more "smarts".
> J.S: Don't you think they'd get "smarts" here?
> Desmond: They'd get "smarts" here, but it's school "smarts" you have to have.... In Jamaica you grow up and at least you know how to "hustle" - how to do things with your hands. You know how to live without school smarts. (individual)

In Alberta, the economy does not seem to allow that degree of flexibility. For many, life without a grade 12 diploma is often difficult.

Discussion

The curriculum can be seen as the main way of disseminating knowledge about Black culture and achievement, to non-Black students and some Black students. As such many student find that the present Social Studies curriculum is Eurocentric in its orientation, and portray Blacks as passive participants in society. On the whole, the students interviewed did not seem to have a firm Africentric perspective with regard to how they would like to see the curriculum restructured. Many indicated that what they objected to, was a situation whereby European culture were emphasized to such an extent that it negated the presence of other histories. This representation of knowledge whereby contributions made by Black people are marginalized can be seen to fit with Foucault's analysis of how power and knowledge are implicated. As he states, "the exercise of power perpetually creates knowledge and conversely knowledge creates power." (1980, p. 52). As a subordinate group in society, knowledge generated by Black people will become part of a process of domination; marginalization indicates its low worth.

Students also expressed concern over the use of the word "nigger" in English textbooks. Students indicated that the use of the slur without contextual analysis often made them feel isolated. The novels the students referred to portray a view of life in which Whites have the dominant active roles. Again the dominant perspective portrayed is that of White North Americans.

Students attend school mainly to gain academic creditation to pursue their future careers. Successful students are those able to defer intrinsic gratification, in order to gain gratification from future careers. As such students need to be able to use projected reasoning to see the value of what they do at school to their future lives. They also have to perceive a successful academic career as plausible, with marks and grades often an important factor in determining this plausibility. Certification can be seen as a form of Weberian "closure" not all students gain the necessary entry to the higher soci-economic levels of society.

Students often know the qualities of a good student, but are not always able to reach this goal due to alienation from the curriculum process and content. In order to relieve this alienation students suggested more active participation in their learning, via discussion and group work. And though some indicated that they did not like to compromise when working in groups, many found such work more collegial and interesting. Others find that the instability of their lives outside school affects the level of energy they have for school work. Though teachers often iterated that their concern about students isrelated solely to their school careers, there are indications that success for a student was often affected by factors outside school.

TEACHER'S VIEWS: "No see ems" the invisibility of Black students in the classroom.

Though this research is based primarily on the views and perceptions of the students, it is worth elaborating on the perspective of the teachers as form of triangulation as well as an indication of differing viewpoints.

There is a general consensus amongst the teachers that Black students in their classes are not particularly visible.

Yet when questioned further many had explanations of classroom life which refers to the students race. Research by Sleeter (1993) outlines how teachers do have a racial perspective on classroom life despite professing "color-blindness." As Mr. Looseleaf illustrates:

> I don't even think of them as being Black.
> I've heard some teachers say that the first thing a student will say [is] "You're just doing that cause you are prejudiced.... A lot of them are using their color as an excuse for what is happening to them."

Ethnic mixing

On initial questioning teachers in both School A and B stated that race was not a significant factor in the lives of the students that they dealt with. They outlined that most of the students mix well in and out of class. With further probing however most teachers admitted that:

> they [ethnic groups] tend to stick together in little cliques...if you go in to the cafeteria at noon its mostly Oriental kids....(teacher, School A)

> There are definite ethnic groupings within the school and I think because as much as anything else...comfort zone, common languages, common cultures common background, common color. (teacher, school B)

Where the teachers saw ethnic conflict they indicated that it was between individuals who happened to be from different ethnic groups. By implication, disputes were not seen as having any racial or ethnic basis.

> There's not much tension between the different races,... but there is tension between individuals of different races or different ethnic groups (teacher, school A)

> I've wondered if ethnicity is the issue or whether its experience .... I've seen disputes that were labelled as racial.... I think that they were disputes between rich and poor.... [Rich have been here a long time while the Blacks have a more limiting experience].... Students wouldn't have a problem if their experiences were similar. (teacher, school B)

Behavior "problems"

Whereas teachers indicated that they thought that they didn't have more problems with Black students than other ethnic groups one teacher suggested that :

> If I take the proportion of Blacks in school there would be more referrals of Blacks.... Mostly in terms of

behavior.... Those Blacks who have come from totally impoverished circumstances. (teacher)

The types of behavior which were highlighted as being inappropriate were the same as those for other students experiencing difficulties with their schooling careers. These types of behaviors ranged from arriving late to non-attendance. One teacher illustrated that these aspects of regular behavior for the general school population seemed accentuated when expressed by Black students:

Mr. Pen: They seem to want to stand out from everybody without realizing that they already stand out". They seem to want to dress louder more conspicuously. Its the same in class, they have to come late and make a big display.... I think the boys are worse than the girls".
J.S: So is their behavior worse than Whites?
Mr. Pen: I don't know if its worse than Whites but it stands out more.... Somebody said "They seem to be more of a problem that they were in the past".... That's how racism develops, because you think "Oh this kid is Black, he is going to be a problem" the minute you see him walk through the door. Its unfortunate.
J.S: So do you think that's happening?
Mr. Pen: I think its going to...because they are setting themselves up for that...by their behavior. (individual)

Black Teachers

Multicultural education literature, (Rampton, 1981; Tomlinson, 1984; Banks, 1981) particularly that based in Britain has indicated that the number of teachers from ethnic groups should be increased. The rationale for this action, has often been based on the social psychological premise that children of "visible" ethnic groups benefit from positive role models. Attendant to this is a suggestion that a good role model improves student self-concept, and attitude to work. The students perspectives are more sophisticated than that of having role models. They do not attribute their potential improved academic standing to the teachers position as a role model. For them it is the type of interaction and level of expectation that would differentiate a Black teacher.

M.A: Would things be different for you if you had a Black teacher?
George: Depends who the Black teacher is? If he is Black he is going to be down, but you can have Black guy who is preaching about Napoleon and Hitler.
Milton: It would have to be a totally different [situation] cause the Black teacher would mix in with the other teachers.
Bryan: I don't agree -- Cause if we had a Black teacher who taught about Napoleon, he'd still give you an incentive, push you up. Get you better marks

M.A: You mean good marks?
George: He'd work you harder. You could talk to him. (focus group)

Generally where a Black teacher is employed, the students perceive her or him as being Black and as having their interest at heart. As Toni indicated, "Now I know what them White kids feel like." However, having a Black teacher was not viewed as advantageous by all students. Among those who were breaking rules by "skipping" a Black teacher was perceived as harassing them in the same way as White teachers did - as truants. This division in student views breaks down mainly (though not totally) along gender lines. Whereas the females could see the long term goal of the teacher was to keep the students in class and hopefully improve their grades, for the male students, this was an issue of intimidation in which a Black teacher was colluding with White administrators to control their behavior.

Desmond: She figures that she is here as a Black administrator. She tries to abuse her power,... Whenever a Black kid gets in to trouble the administrator they take it to Miss Green. She figures that just because she is Black, she knows everything that go on within us.
Malcolm: [...] she doesn't like him. She says that she is helping us but yet she is aggravating all of us. Sometimes, it will be a cafe full of people skipping and she will go to us harass us and leave.... Sometimes it's like she is harassing us for the fun.
Bobby: We have our own area in the cafe that we all sit at and there are the Lebanese people there, the Whites there, and she will pass all the Lebanese people and get us into trouble and then walk out the door.
Desmond: She wants to show the other administrator that she can control us .... I think that she is quick to jump to suspension because the less of us there is the easier her job is.
Barrington: I guess that she feels that we reflect on her. She shouldn't care what other administrators think. She should just try to do her job and look after every student.... I know that she is Black and we are Black, I guess that she looks at us and tries to help us a little more, but still she shouldn't have people saying that she harasses us. (focus group, school B)

For some of the females in School B the views of the young men could be explained by their unwillingness to accept being told what to do. The following interview extract shows not only a variety of perspectives on having a Black teacher, but also females analysis of why some of the young males react as they do[8]:

Lilieth : A lot of people don't like her because of that when

> you think about it she is the only Black teacher in the school. And if anything goes wrong with us they look at her so she has to keep us in track. A lot ofthe guys think that she is a this and she is a that. They think that she is picking on them.
>
> Maya: They don't see the advantages.
>
> Zora : They can't handle authority
>
> J.S: You think so?
>
> Grace: Their parents can't even control them
>
> Zora: They are so used to having their way and going everywhere. That's why they can't stand her, because she tells them what to do. They can't handle that.
>
> J.S: You don't feel the same about her?
>
> Maya: We understand more,
>
> Grace: Every now and then you might want to skip...guys do it worse, and if you get caught you are going to get mad. But you understand her point.... At school, as my mum always says "You are Black you have to work twice as hard." (focus group)

The latter points elucidated by the interviews relate to findings by East et al., (1989) in a Toronto school. As Black women teachers they experienced problems with Black male students, who they thought saw them as traitors to their race.

For non-Black teachers employment of any teacher who they see as having attained their position because of their ethnicity is unethical. As one teacher stated:

> I'd hate anyone to be appointed because of their ethnicity.... If two teachers are equal, one Black one White, I'd hire the Black, but if the White was better then I'd hire them.

One can suggest that the Black teachers benefit all students as well as parents, in their capacity to counteract negative stereotypes. For a few teachers having a Black teacher on staff had sensitized them to issues of race and ethnicity.

Administrators.

Students make a distinction between the administrators, and class teachers. The administrators as coordinators of courses are the gatekeepers of the various levels of courses undertaken by the students. In this manner administrators have replaced counselors, as described by Cicourel and Kituse (1963), as those having the greatest impact on which academic streams students enter. Under the Alberta education system, where specific levels of courses (ie 30, 33,) are seen as leading to specific types of post-secondary institutions and to certain educational institutions, there is a high correlation between higher education, and economic mobility. The coordinators are responsible for programing, as well as administering discipline problems that arise with their students. One can see that these administrators are at the intersection of many aspects of the students' school lives. The only source of challenge to the administrators decisions about course choice are parents, and this is entirely dependent upon parental interest, perseverance, and knowledge of theschool system. Some parents did challenge, administrators' decisions concerning course choices for their child. At times administrators saw these parental challenges as failing the child, because of what they termed unrealistic expectations placed on the child by a parent. One administrator, gave an example of how course choices are decided:

J.S: How do you decide if a student should take a course?
M/s Ink; They have to have a plan of what they want to do when they finish school and we have to counsel them whether their choice is realistic or not. The student who come here from Junior High with marks in the 40s and 50s and wants to be a brain surgeon we have to say "Whoa! lets make some realistic choices.... Lets go a year at a time and see how we go."... Sometimes we have parents that insist my kid is going to be a rocket scientist and the realism isn't there." (administrator)

Whereas for the teacher, it is an issue of being realistic, for the student, the issue is one of the teacher having low expectations, which affects interaction, and the type of work given to the student. It comes down to who is really able to determine the true capability of a student. Hyacinth indicates this perspective from her viewpoint.

Hyacinth: I went to M/s. Ink and I was telling her that I was having trouble with [German]...and she said "How old are you now?" and I said "Fifteen" and she said "Well you are going to be out of here soon...don't worry about it." I wasn't saying I wanted to drop out of school I wanted help.
Toni: That's how they keep us down, like we can't do anything, like the White people can. (focus group)

If the administrators don't see race as a salient feature, then they are unlikely to be able to recognize racial dynamics at work if they arise. Predominantly they are White, and as such they represent not only authority, but a White authority. Many of the administrators were unaware of this dimension of their interaction with their students. It is therefore not surprising that their perception was one of being "fair" while the students referred to them as being "racist." We can gain an insight of how this interaction of differing perceptions works if we look at the following interview extract:

> They [some Black students] automatically have the perception of counselors (coordinators) as racist jerks...so they go in with that attitude, so that counselor responds negative towards them. My counselor, if you are positive, he'll give you respect. (group)

Though the teacher is in a potential position of power in the classroom, the students can challenge and resist this at times by using the charge of racism against the teacher in order to try to negotiate and rationalize their behavior.

J.S: How do you get on generally with teachers?.

Paula: Good, I don't see any problems.... They help me when I want help. The teachers react to different people. Some Black girls they say stuff that's pretty rude to the teacher. That's when the teacher might say something, and that's when they [Black student] will say oh yes that they [teachers] are prejudice, but if you have respect for them then on the whole they will have respect for you.

J.S: Can you give me an example?

Paula: An example, the teacher is talking directly to the person, telling them you shouldn't do this, and if you do then I will kick you out, and the Black person will say "Yeah, it's because I'm Black."

At times this challenge of the teachers neutrality makes teacher more sensitized to the fact that they are dealing with a student of a different race and ethnicity:

> I believe that at this point of time, I'm almost cautious about my interaction with Black students when they are in difficulty. Because they tell me I am prejudiced.... It doesn't bother me anymore as it once did.... I've had to [refer] 4 students [to a higher authority] and 3 of these students have been Black. [This affected my actions because] I really didn't want to take another one. (individual)

The students seem to have the potential to intervene in the process of their punishment by labelling a teacher as racist in such a way that it undermines the teachers' basic role of being seen to be "fair."

Discussion

The way that a student interacts with the teacher has a racial dimension, even if the teacher may not acknowledge this. For students having a Black teacher was advantageous mainly because they perceived such a teacher as having a higher expectations of them, as well as being more caring. Expectations are an area of conflict between students and administrators. This is especially pertinent because coordinators take on the role of gate-keepers to courses.

Using the students past academic records, and attitude they determine which courses students should enter. For some students, these were not seen as an accurate criteria by which to judge their ability, because they were often capable of achieving more than indicated by existing measures.

The employment of a Black teacher was seen as advantageous for schools by some students. At times when a Black teacher is isolated, he or she can become type caste as being employed only to deal with Black students and thus soon becoming ghettoised within the school structure. Some teachers viewed the employment of Black teachers as advantageous for schools as institutions, because it heightened the awareness of non-Black teachers to issues of race and ethnicity. As role models Black teachers are as important to non-Blacks as to Black students.

Endnotes

1. Eurocentric refers to "an ideology, or body of myths, symbols, ideas and practices that exclusively or predominantly values the world view and cultural manifestations (e.g., history, politics, art, language) of people of European origin, and that denigrates and subordinates the cultural manifestations of people from all other lands of origins (Swartz, 1992, p. 324).
   Africentric has various interpretations, but Michael Harris 1992, suggest that "Africentric proposes that people of African descent or cultural orientation center their view and evaluation of the world within their own historical and ontological framework." (1992, 306).

2. The "knowing" which Milton refers to is what he has gained from the school text books i.e a representation.

3. "Under the gaze" refers to the feeling of isolation that Black students felt when they were in a minority in a social situation. Refer to chapter 3 for more information.

4. The students stressed the context within which the terminology was used. They indicate that often the term was not problematized by the teacher, i.e not looked at from a critical perspective.

5. This can be related to Willis's work on resistance whereby students use various strategies in order to resist domination of values and processes. Other students indicated that they applied mental resistance whereby they mentally slept in lessons.

6. Sociological literature attests to the importance of "class" in successful school careers. This research as exploratory, did not specifically highlight class as a variable for discussion. Aspects of their socio-economic backgrounds were garnered, but not all the students returned their questionnaires. Location within families, seemed to be an important factor in school success, as was parental involvement in monitoring the students progress.

7. This heavy emphasis on the Neo-Conservative economic rationale, is found in policy documents such as Towards 2000 as well as in Joe Freedman's Failing Grades, video supported by Alberta education.

8. Gender dynamics are at play here, as we explore how gendered and racial identities are constructed.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter will discuss and summarize the major findings from my data in terms of themes. Possible paths for future research as well as specific recommendations for policies will be highlighted.

Identity

Ethnic identity is part of a social and gendered identity located in a family within a particular set of relations of productions (Young, p. 218). For the students interviewed, the positions of identity made available to them derive from various sources such as youth culture, churches, as well as community sources. Often there is no neat fit between these positions of identity; they can be contradictory and shifting according to time, space or historical moment. As such, analysis of how the students relate to televisual and musical productions indicates one segment of their ethnic identity.

Identity and representation refers "to the questions of the social power that resides in the specific arrangements and deployment of subjectivity in cultural and ideological practices in schooling and society" (McCarthy & Crichlow 1993, p. xvi). As part of that ideological and cultural practice, the films that the students watched offered the possibility for deployment of subjectivity. Specifically, there has been a growth in the general accessibility to music, and films relating the lives of Black American urban youths. In looking at productions such as Boyz N Hood and Menace II Society which were often mentioned by the students we find that though they are produced by Black directors such as John Singleton, these constructions are problematic. As a critique, Nelson George indicates how in content and marketing many of these films resemble the 1960's and 1970's Blaxploitation films suchas Shaft and Superfly. Although this critque may be overstated, from a feminist perspective, bell hooks (1992) accurately berates these films for being masculinist and sexist intheir portrayal of women. We find that often women are portrayed as nurturers; there as background for the males to playout their roles.

While theses specific films may not form the basis of an identity for all Black students, they have an appeal to those whose affective levels they tap. This taking on of a perceived Black identity as some students did, and the way in which this identity becomes tied to an affective as well as cognitive aspect is echoed in Althusser's concept of "mise-en-scene of interpellation". For him the term refers to the organization and arrangement of domination and subordination in cultural forms of identity formation. Deborah Britzman (1991), suggests that interpellation refers to the unconscious ways in which authoritative ideas become infused with personal investment and thus become a part of who we are. This affective element may well help in understanding the process of social construction and reproduction. Those students who were located at deeper levels within church organizations were less likely to adopt televisual and musical sources for identity. Females also seemed less likely to adopt these overt subcultural aspects into their daily interaction. The latter may be due to an absence of female representations in many of these films which are based on male bonding and subcultures.

If one adds to these critiques the fact that many of these media forms are controlled (for example film distribution) by dominant White society their use by students in order to gain access to their culture is problematic. The representations of Blacks are often constructed to satisfy these entertainment corporations and can reflect the dominant relations in society (Gray 1993). It is therefore complex to determine what "knowing one's self" means to the students since what they "know" is often a representation and can change over time. Heroes mentioned such as Malcolm X, are often known by their media constructions. While this indicates a broadening of access to "knowledge" about Blacks, it also highlights the possibility that screen creations may become a primary source for gaining information thus leading to a situation that George (1992) describes as youths reading things into Malcolm X but not reading Malcolm himself. Though some students watched films produced primarily for a White mainstream audience and saw them purely in terms of entertainment, others were able to offer critique based on a sense of "collective memory" of how Blacks had been exploited and marginalized in a dominant White society. The latter can be seen as what Giroux describes as using memory as a tool of critique. This perspective is indicative of one espoused by Ellsworth whereby "oppositional "readings" are always possible, and it is unlikely that any individual student...will actually experience a particular film the way the film maker intended (Masterman, 1985 cited in McCarthy and Crichlow 1993).

The data is in line with the general trend in Canadian broadcasting which reflects the assimilationist impact that American television has on youths and the general population (Trend 1993). Most of the programs that the students liked to watch were produced in the U.S. and focussed on the activities of Blacks in situation comedies, or talk shows. So even though the students' direct experiences are in Edmonton, which is predominantly White, their vicarious experiences extend to the U.S., and the attitudes and values they are exposed to are those that are prevalent in American society. Since race is an important construct in American society, sc the students are getting a racial dimension in their viewing, even if race is not mentioned overtly.

As with most youths music played a role in the lives of the students. The majority of the music the students listen to is produced by Blacks though not totally, as some students indicated that they listened to European classical music, and "alternative." Rap music is often constructed by the media as the musical genre preferred by Black youths, it is therefore interesting that there is no wholesale adoption of this musical form. Some students had a critique of rap based on its commodification, as well as its misogynistic lyrics which refer to women as "hoes" and "bitches." It is debatable as to how much these invectives affected the gender attitudes of males who listened to rap, but in the interviews, a few males did refer quite freely to women as "bitches" in negative ways which became intertwined with their gender relationships. Rap is often portrayed in the media as a catalyst for violence towards White dominated society and is part of the construction of Black youth as a threat (Koza, 1994). Yet among the students, this was not reflected, many listened to the lyrics, but the uses they made of them depended on gender, degree of location in a family structure, influences of organized religion, as well as the level of affective feedback received from listening. For some students the lyrics were seen as important because they discussed issues related to living in a dominant White society. But this was at the level of consciousness raising with regard to conditions that exist for Blacks in the U.S. rather than physical violence against Whites. Reggae was very popular among many of the students, a factor which is a reflection of their Caribbean cultural background.

Knowledge of musical tastes, and leisure pursuits were seen as part of the process of "knowing where someone is coming from." The implication of the latter was that knowledge of similar social activities was important for deeper levels of friendships. This link was not absolute however, as indicated by those students who had White friends with whom they had shared experiences over time, but did not share musical tastes or leisure pursuits.

Essentialism

Some of the students saw themselves in what might be defined as essentialist terms, because they saw Blackness as represented by specific ways of acting. This commonality was based on what one student called, "experience with the White man." A few students saw themselves as not fitting within the confines of what was defined as Black behavior. These students have more affinity with Homi Bhabha's "third space" which is neither essentialist nor rejecting their Blackness. The ability of some student to adopt this "third space" was linked to them having a strong belief in themselves, experiences of mixing socially with Whites, and the ability to withstand others insinuating that they did not "know themselves."

For post structuralists, the disadvantage of essentialism is that it reifies a specific construct so that being Black becomes one-dimensional (hooks, 1992; Bhabha, 1990). This reification keeps groups of people within specific modes of behavior; it is a method of ascription, a form of social control. The ramifications of this process are often lost on those involved, because the attitudes, behavior and values have an affective element, which allows the individuals concerned to feel that they are benefitting from behaving in this specific way. The behaviors, values and attitudes when looked at wholistically would be what is described as culture. It is the everyday ways that people interpret their lives. The critique of essentialism, while very good for abstract theorizing within academic institutions, has problems when it comes to challenging the concrete ways in which subjects define themselves. As such, critique of essentialism tends to leave out the affective attachment that individuals have to a specific way of behaving and acting (Gray 1993). Among some of the Black student population interviewed, there was a strong affective group feedback in them subscribing to an essentialist notion of what it means to be Black (hooks 1992).

Relationships

The school provides the meeting point for socialization and group formation. As students move to high school, friendship groups gain more ethnic cohesiveness, which in turn is reinforced by their social interaction outside school. As within all institutions, there is a degree of overlap between groups by individuals who do not feel the need or the pressure to adhere to one group. We have to look at what "needs" groups adhesion satisfies within a school organization and then ask what are the pressures that bring about adherence to an ethnic group. For the group of Jamaican born young men in particular, it seems to be an understanding of the alienation of schooling, that they feel when they enter the schooling system. They gravitate towards those who they think understand them. In dress, and behavior, they exhibit a cultural style that is "Black" adopted and developed from Jamaican and American youth culture. They are used to being in an environment where they are surrounded by predominantly Black population, to enter a society that is predominantly White in which racial constructions are different and based on more overt forms of dominance causes a heightened sense of isolation.

Structurally the schooling system in Alberta, is heavily geared towards recognition of academic achievement as the primary indicator of success. One student suggested that in Jamaica, there was an alternative in being able to "hustle" if he was not academically inclined; that flexibility doesn't exist in the present neo-Conservative climate of Alberta.

Within schools many students maintained friendship groups with other Black students. From within the larger Black group of students, individuals chose friends with whom they felt they had most in common as for example those who were regular church attenders, or those who enjoyed similar sports, or whose families had similar rules and values. In school B: in particular, many students stated that they had specifically chosen to attend that school because of the number of Black students present. Under these circumstances, the students indicated that common cultural knowledge such as playing dominoes, or musical tastes help to maintain a cohesiveness, again this was articulated as some one "knowing where you are coming from."

In another sense, using an ethnicity paradigm, the cohesiveness of some of the groups of the students could be termed ethnic resource mobilization (Van den Bergh, 1976). Here some of the students in school B indicated that it was advantageous to be in a group to provide support if threatened by others. These others tended to be other groups who were referred to by their ethnic names such as "Lebs" Chinese or Vietnamese. Though the students in school B indicated that they had fairly amicable relations with other ethnic groups and on the whole disputes were few, a minority did indicate that they regarded the Lebanese group as intimidatory, because they moved around as a group (a similar charge was made against Black students). Outside school antagonisms between students at school B and some students suspended from school A tended to be with Chinese and Vietnamese. Some of these seemed to be ongoing, and were based on maintaining a reputation as well as power. From what the students stated, at times these altercations escalated into violence with the police being involved. For the friendship crews mentioned in chapter four these "ingroup"/ "outgroup" disputes reinforced their group cohesiveness.

Though the schools stated clearly that these disputes were not racial and did not involve the schools directly, the students indicated cases where these disputes had entered schools and affected the dynamics of in -- school social interaction. It should be made clear that as with all the activities involving Black students not all students used the same strategies in order to solve problems that they encountered and not all of them felt the need to maintain a tie based on cultural aspects.

Among those born in the Caribbean and who emigrated at Junior High level there seemed to be a closer tie with Jamaica, and at times this was used to compare themselves against students who had lived in Canada for a longer period of time and who were seen as having adapted to the dominant values to such an extent that they had forgotten "where they had come from."

This tendency to in-group association on a deeper social level can be seen as a result of many of the Black students perceiving students from other ethnic groups as not having anything in common with them. Friendship groups were a source of importance both for gaining access to knowledge about themselves and also as sources of affective support and feedback. Particularly among the males, cliques were more evident as a form of grouping. This grouping may be a response to the prevalent constructions of young Black males in society as "troublemakers", in which case they may well experience more verbal and physical intimidation. This gender difference in the importance of peer groups has been alluded to in research carried out by Fuller (1980), Furlong (1978), and Mac an Ghaill (1988). As one of Fuller's female participants indicated:

> I find that most boys do have ambitions but they're influenced by their friends, so they never get put into practice anyway.... (cited in Riley 1985 p. 60)

One young man on probation for a serious crime indicated the importance of one's friends as a reference group when he commented that you can get "positives for being good and for being bad." The significance of this for him was that the decision to commit a crime was not just based on a moral decision, it also involved a strong affective element. Support from a peer group was seen as beneficial particularly when dealing with other groups in schools. A sense of cohesiveness was used in differing ways, in order to intimidate, or to protect, or to relate to others who had an understanding of where you are coming from.

Patriarchal relations

Generally the young women in line with other research (Mac an Ghaill, 1988) are aware of sexism as well as racism. As such they put a great deal of emphasis on respect in a relationship, this process can be described as "having attitude." Seen as "resistance" to patriarchal relations it is used as justification by some males to affirm their relations with women from other ethnic groups. In order to maintain a hold and control over the non-Black partners who females interact with, some males employ the use of "collective memory" to get females to prioritize racial unity over gender relations. The young Black men use "knowing yourself" as a construct with which to get the young Black women to limit themselves to Black male partners. Referring to the collective memory and the way in which racial construction has affected gender relations the males posit a position whereby the females are caught at the intersection of their gender and their race. Generally there have been more relationships between Black male and White females than vice -- versa. The males, and to a certain extent some females maintain a sense of boundary maintenance by using racial unity in order to maintain cohesion and keep in bounds those females who are thinking of crossing the race/gender line. Confirmation that Blacks as well as White attest to this form of boundary maintenance can be seen in hooks's comment that:

> many black people are just as committed to racial solidarity as white people and they believe it can best be maintained by discouraging legalized union between white men and black women." (hooks, 1981, p. 67)

For Black women, past racial constructions are linked to present day interactions. Often, Black women are constructed as exotic sexual objects rather than "serious" future partners for White men (Hooks, 1981, Collins 1991) One can see affirmation of this point by the dominant White focus of many women's magazines, and in the Edmonton Journal's "lonely hearts" column.

For women, "knowing themselves," means having relations with males from their own ethnic group. Yet the construct for men is not as strong, and varied by ethnicity. Some Jamaican-born males indicated that Canadian-born Black men were more likely to take a relationship with a Non-Black woman more seriously, while for them it often was not a serious long term relationship. It was difficult to ascertain if this was merely a rationalization of their behavior or not. As bell hooks states:

> While there is no need to deny the historical fact that white men have sexually exploited black women , this knowledge is used by white and black public as psychological weapon to limit and restrain the freedom of black females. (hooks, 1981, p. 67)

Curriculum

Underlying and reinforcing the theme of racialization is the construction of knowledge via the official curriculum. As indicated in chapter five the present curriculum can be seen as marginalizing Blacks from both a North American and an African perspective. The view that the official Social Studies curriculum promotes is Eurocentric with other perspectives being incorporated, but seen as peripheral. In fact this hegemony is so complete, that often the assumption behind what is taught is that unless mentioned directly, all knowledge creators are White. As an example of the way this hegemony works, one student described how when he was doing a project on inventions made by Black North Americans he and his mother felt that they couldn't give all the details of their findings because the project would be viewed with disbelief. This indicates the degree of "common-sense" racism that exists in wider society where it cannot be comprehended that Blacks have made intellectual contributions to the construction of present day society other than as slaves. Even if the student was incorrect in his perception of how his project would be received, the situation still illustrates how racial construction affects the perceptions and behavior of Blacks and non-Blacks in society.

Recent theorizing among cultural theorists and historians (Bernal, 1987; Philip, 1993) have indicated that often this presence of Blacks in North American society is not made visible, yet contributes towards the construction of being White. It is this aspect of social construction that Toni Morrison alludes to when discussing the way that White literature has developed with a unrecognized presence of Blackness. As Morrison states "even and especially when American texts are not about Africanist presence or character or narrative or idiom the shadow hovers in implication in sign in line of demarcation" (1992, p. 46). Racial constructions are present in the texts that are studied by the students, and while the books chosen may well be seen as humanist by teachers who are White, they are not necessarily received as so by Black students. What the interviews reveal is that texts have multiple identities and depending on race gender and class so interpretations of them can differ. Often the novels used for English Language which have an overt racial dimension, are written from the perspective of White peoples' experiences and response to Blacks. As an example, The Cay which is mentioned by the students is the young boy Philip's story, its focus is one- dimensional. The character of the old Black man is never explored fully, he is what one might term "flat." So what we have is a text within a text, its outer core indicates that the text challenges racism, but the inner text is itself a reflection of the racism that it attempts to undermine. The patriarchal attitudes that Philip adopts pander to the stereotypes that Whites have of Blacks that they cannot organize their own lives without the help of Whites. As teachers we have to reflect deeply on the choice of text and view its multi-dimensionality. Just as subjects have multiple identities, so does text. The underlying sentiments of color-blindness are indicated by the following comments on the jacket cover:

> Mr Taylor has provided an exciting story... The idea that all humanity would benefit from this special form of color blindness permeates the whole book... The result is a story with a high ethical purpose but no sermon." (The New York Times. Quoted on the jacket of the sleeve of The Cay 1969).

The perspective that the students have towards the curriculum is interesting because they want changes not to necessarily improve their self-concept, as indicated by Milner (1983) and Clarke's (1939) research, but rather for the benefit of non-Black society as much as themselves. This perspective can be seen as one that recognizes their marginalization as structural racism which promotes specific constructions.

Pedagogy

Pedagogy is seen as important in the process of knowledge transmission. As such, a curriculum that challenges the dominant relations based on marginalization that the students indicate exists in the present social studies curriculum, will not be eradicated by an additive approach. How knowledge is conveyed implies how it is viewed and the role that the learner plays in that process. Knowledge constructed as part of the process of dominance is static and given. In the same way that the students saw themselves as marginalized, so some students see the curriculum and the knowledge that it perpetuates as given, one dimensional and not questioned. The latter is a reflection of the positivist rationale which underlies the desemination of knowledge in the classroom (Giroux, 1981).

The students indicated a liking for a more active role in their learning. Where pedagogy was more active it left a favorable impression on students. As Bev illustrates below:

Bev: I remember a social class when we were learning about Greece. and it could be so boring but the teacher made it interesting, we had to make our whole classroom into Greece. changed our desks around, we made roofs and doors and...made pretend wine. And you learned...

J.S: This was at high school?

Bev: No not really, (Laughing) but it was fun...I never forgot it.

The teachers also realized the benefits of using active learning to promote learning, as well as more classroom interaction. However, moving from rhetoric to practice was not always easy. As M/s Rubber indicated:

J.S: What teaching strategies do you adopt?

M/s Rubber: My preferred teaching style is lecture and notes- but I vary it. I have work sheets that I have students do but I'm what you call a traditional presenter, and do a little but very little bit of group work. Every year I say to myself I'm going to increase that because students enjoy it, but I can't [laughing] I sort of loose control of the presentation. That's a downfall on my part. But basically, my presentation, my preferred [style] is lecture notes and examples and discussion.

J.S.: Are there other members of staff that adopt these strategies?

M/s. Rubber: There are a number who are traditionalists like myself and do a very fine job and there are others who do a lot of cooperative learning and are very successful and the kids love them and you go into their classrooms and it looks like pandemonium, but you can tell there is learning going on. (individual, teacher)

Teachers' Views

The views of the teachers on the present curriculum suggest that most recognize the curriculum as Eurocentric, but views on what should be done in order to address the situation varies. The "additive perspective," while viewed by some teachers as the most appropriate, posed problems of enactment since as the teachers implied, there were numerous groups marginalized at present. How could one add all these perspectives? In a sense what is needed is a perspective which looks anew at the curriculum, and re-negotiate its purpose and content. If one adopts a perspective which looks at concepts or themes then there is a much stronger likelihood that one will be able to account for differences in the school population. In conjunction with this, an incorporation of learning strategies that students indicated they enjoyed such as cooperative learning and discussion, could be used to investigate and critique knowledge areas and the dominant relations they reflect.

The students also mentioned the sensitivity of discussing issues related to race especially when they were in a minority in a class . One of the students suggests a way round this sensitivity:

M.A: What can the teacher do to improve the atmosphere when more sensitive issues are discussed?

George: Talk about the term in front of the class...We did Catcher in the Rye, and the guy talked about nigger here and there. Teacher never said nothing.

Bryan: Some of them do

Milton: They approach it in different ways...Most of the time it makes you feel big time uncomfortable.

If knowledge is viewed as an area of social construction and open to critique then the way in which these novels are taught may well change. It might be possible to move away from a focus on White North American experiences.

Black teachers were more willing to speculate on the social and academic presence of Black students in the classrooms. Some non-Black teachers were also aware of Black students and these tended to be teachers who had interaction with Blacks outside of the school environment, or who's general teaching style was one that took into account the individual need of their students. Employment of Black teachers is often advocated as part of the self-concept improvement of Black students in that, the Black teacher is seen as role model. But in reality the racial dynamics are not as simple as that, since caring and higher expectations were given as the important gains of having a Black teacher. It can also be noted that if a Black teacher is isolated in a school they may well be perceived by both students and fellow teachers as being there for Black students, thus affecting their interaction with both groups, and possible ghettoization in terms of career prospects.

In reality the indications are that Whites are in need of Black role models as much if not more that Black students.

Resistance

The students' narratives reveal that not only do they react to their construction, but they are also part of the process. I looked to theories of resistance as encapsulated in the ethnographic work of Paul Willis (1977) in order to interpret this phenomena. The importance of Willis's work is that it broke the classical Marxian mold which had bound the human subject as an object within the levels of economic production; a position so socially determined, that it allowed no agency.

In this study various instances of resistance occurs, but in most cases, the results are that students reinforce the situation they are trying to challenge. Particularly the discussion in Chapter three highlights how when a specific group of young males find themselves "under the gaze" and respond by "glaring," even though they interrupt the gaze, they nonetheless end up in a position whereby they reinforce the stereotype of young Blacks as confrontational and violent. In a similar manner the young women in resisting domination in their relations with some of the Black young men find that ultimately their resistance is turned around and used against them as justification for some males associating more freely with women in other ethnic groups. The latter indicates that perhaps "interruption" is a better descriptor than "resistance."

Within the classroom, "skipping was the most common form of resistance to the classroom regime. It seems therefore that resistance can be seen as part of the process of dominant relations.

CONCLUSIONS/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The overall trends of ethnic clustering in school is a reflection of what is going on in mainstream society. On the whole though ethnic/racial groups mix in the work place and share institutions and facilities, they do not have a wholesale deeper level of social interaction such as invitations to each others home, or acceptance of intermarriage. This subscribes to Gordan's (1964) description of cultural pluralism, even though the popular use of the term belies greater levels of interaction.

Recommendations

1. Changes should be made to the way in which the social studies curriculum is organized. Though materials on Black people is at present in some texts, it is marginalized. This marginalization is reinforced by the constant use of European case studies, where present day issue are highlighted. Particularly more recognition could be made of the role that Black settlers played in Alberta. At the moment settlers are

socially constructed as White. This perspective could be developed in relation to the grade 10 syllabus. As educators, we need to constantly look at the curriculum as a whole rather than as isolated subjects, so that we are not reinforcing a specific perspective unknowingly.
In view of the time constraints often put on teachers, more effort should be made to develop texts and resources which include these differing perspectives.

2. More use be made of different teaching strategies where the students can use their verbal skills. General discussions on gender related issues would also be beneficial.

3. More use of cooperative group work to assist interaction between students from different ethnic and racial groups. Also use of project work in order to increase opportunity for students to focus on areas of knowledge which have a personal relevance for them.

4. Students should have a mentor, who primarily has the students whole "school interest" at heart. At present, the administrators act in potentially conflicting roles of "gatekeepers" to courses as well as disciplinarians.

5. More recognition should be made of the differing home circumstances of the students. For some students, who seem to be experiencing difficulties, schoolwork was made more difficult because they lived away from home, and lacked parental supervision.

6. Schools should develop policies to deal with racial incidents and slurs, especially at the elementary level. Many students indicated that their younger brothers and sisters were still victims of this form of verbal abuse.
   Teachers need to be aware of conflict management strategies and how to intervene where a child has been verbally abused to such an extent that they have retaliated.

7. Pre-service teachers need to be made aware that groups other than those presently foregrounded have contributed to society in a variety of ways. They also need to be aware that critique is an important part of teaching, and that teaching encompasses more than a "banking of knowledge."

Further Research

In conjunction with the above recommendations, I would propose that further research be carried out in some of the specific areas that my research has highlighted. Particularly, whether the degree of ethnic clustering follows students into the workforce and higher education. Also of interest would be further in depth study of the classroom behavior of Black students. Further in depth interviews could be carried out with the young women in order to get a more thorough understanding of how patriarchal relations operate.

"Under the gaze" is also an area worth pursuing and could give valuable information on how social spaces and dominance are maintained by ethnic and racial groups.

Generally my research could have benefitted from a longer period of time, more participant observations.

Conclusion.

The patterns that emerge from the analysis of my data indicate that for this specific group of students race/ethnicity has an impact on the way in which they experience their schooling. Schools are not divorced from society, but are in many ways a reflection. As race is a salient construct within present day society, how individuals react to their constructions has implications for their school lives. The following comments by a teacher alludes to this situation:

> If any group of kids pick up negative stereotypes from the music from the media it's not going to reflect well on them back in school........There's a lot of anger in L.A. rightly so, but a kid growing up in Edmonton, doesn't have that anger. Shouldn't have that anger. But its a neat thing to be. (individual)

In relation to the above comments one should note that within the Canadian mosaic there is little representation of a Black presence, and in conjunction with other non-Blacks it is no surprise that some students look to the U.S. for sources of identity. The students may not live in L.A. but based on a sense of Black identity, these students are aware of their parallel Canadian constructions as subordinates in a dominant White society.

Generally among teachers there is a sense of denial that a student's "race" affects the way in which they experience school. This seems to be based on the premise that by not acknowledging difference, one is treating everyone equally. This is also evident in other societies, for example Judith Simons (1986) in her research on Maori education suggests that teachers motivated by a desire to practice egalitarianism, often take this stance without recognizing that they are still discriminating against the Moari child but in a different way. As one student in my research indicated "I'm Black and I'm proud, I don't want to be grey!"

Adopting a "colour blind" attitude that does not recognize socially constructed differences does not mean that the significance of these differences disappear!

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APPENDIX A: Example Of RAPPAGES Letters Page

RAP BAG

(continued from page 5)

tion by being too controversial. For example, some lyrics do indeed advocate violence, misogyny, drug use and anti-Semitism.

However, the violence that occurs among our nation's youth does not happen because of violent rap lyrics. Rather, the violence is a reflection of the random anger and tribalism associated with teenagers [and the] diminishing expectations of lower-class youth. The real trouble occurs when people get together to get drunk and high. In this scenario, the actual problem is substance abuse, not violent rap lyrics.

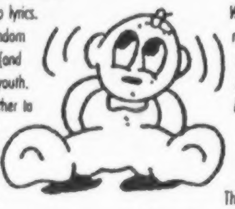
It's up to us, the listeners, to educate others about the serious implications of random violence. Like it or not, some people imitate what they see, most notably our children and youth. They don't know any better. Hardcore, cutting-edge lyrics are newsreels of the inner city, depicting ghetto realities and Black consciousness in ways that have previously gone unreported. But at the same time, we must be responsible for how we express ourselves and consider how our actions affect others around us.

—Jeff Grice
Midland, MI

SKOOB ON BOOKS?

I don't read the newspaper, but I try hard every day working on my reading. I have an unusual story for you. It deals with books. My mom sleeps on them and I think it's something the public should know about. She does other things, but she sometimes uses books in her pillow.

—Devin
Bronx, NY



While we encourage all our readers not to sleep on books—literally or figuratively. We definitely want to hear more about moms. Write back!

SHIFTING GEAR AND COMING CORRECT

Thank you for publishing a photograph of Busta Rhymes sporting an "Andre Charles" T-shirt on page 62 of your December issue of *RAPPAGES*. In the article, you incorrectly identified the T-shirt as a "Keith Haring." Although Keith and I worked together and inspired each other's work, that shirt is definitely mine.

—Andre Charles
New York, NY

WIGGIN' OUT

I am a 14-year-old white Hip-Hopper and I hate [the word] wigger. For one thing, what is a wigger? The definition I always hear is a white person who listens to rap and dresses in big clothes or a white person who is trying to be Black. This is stupid, wacked-up shit. There is nothing in this world that is "Black" or "white." The only way that I could be tryin' to be Black is if I dye my skin.

Now, where I live there is not that many Black people. In fact, there isn't that many people of any other race, besides Hick. I get called a wigger and have had people threaten to kick da shit outta me because I listen to rap. Now, I have alwayz thought that Hip-Hop lovers would stick together, but I now know that that is not true. There seems to be a lot of Black people that think I should be killed just because I am white and listen to rap.

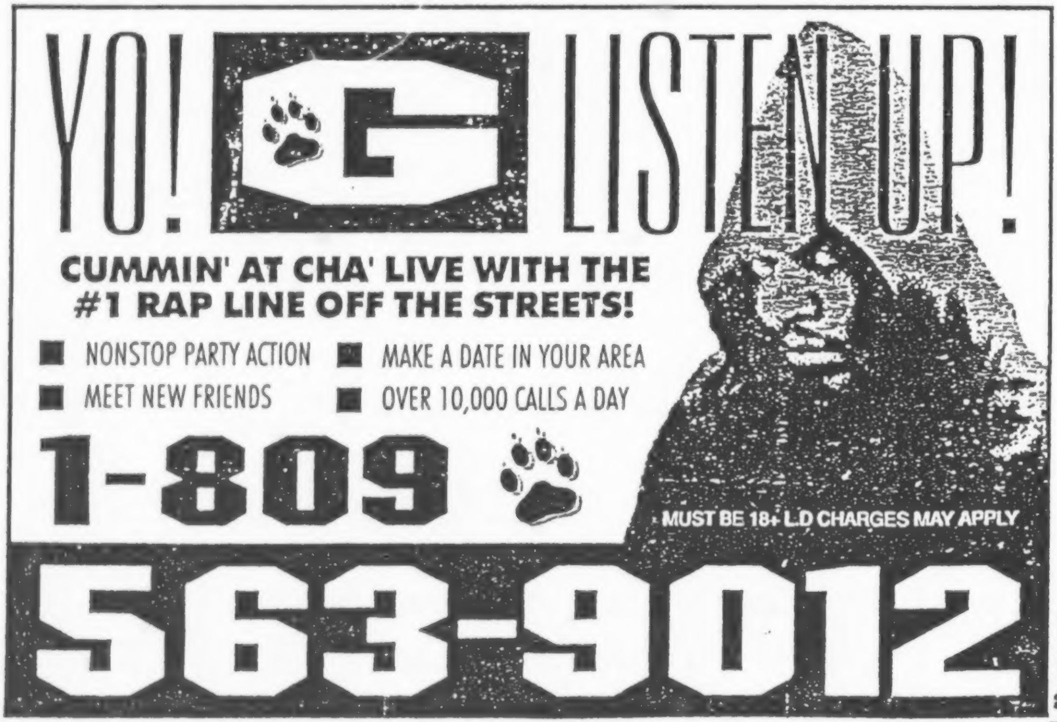
I have been readin' *RAPPAGES* for two years now and have noticed that in every issue y'all chump on wiggers or white people in general. What the phukk is up? I don't think that I am stealin' your culture. If I was dressin' in Afrikan clothes and started to chant Afrikan prayers and shit, then you could say that I am stealin' your culture.

Now, you are right in one aspect. America is still AmeriKKKa, but my generation will soon be in power and then I hope that Black people and white people [will] not make the color of our skin a barrier that blocks friendship.

Well, I just have one last question. Why can't I listen to Hip-Hop and dress in fly clothes without bein' called a wigger or perp or wannabe or any other phukked-up names?

—Aaron Ball
Bowdoinham, ME

Send your letters to: *RapBag*
c/o *RAPPAGES* Magazine
9171 Wilshire Blvd., #300
Beverly Hills, CA 90210



YO! LISTEN UP!

CUMMIN' AT CHA' LIVE WITH THE #1 RAP LINE OFF THE STREETS!

- NONSTOP PARTY ACTION
- MAKE A DATE IN YOUR AREA
- MEET NEW FRIENDS
- OVER 10,000 CALLS A DAY

1-809 563-9012

MUST BE 18+ LD CHARGES MAY APPLY

APPENDIX B: Focus Questioning Route

Questions

1. What is it like to be Black in this high school?

Probes:
How did you feel when it happened?
What do you think was the cause?
Has that happened to anyone else, can you give me an example?
Think back, when is being Black in this high school a positive experience, When is it not?

2. How do you get on with the teachers in this school?

Probes:
Why do you say that, can you give me an example?
Do you think they treat you differently because of your ethnic group?
How do you react, when you are treated in that way?
Do you think a Black teacher would behave differently?

3. How do you get on with other ethnic groups in the school?

Probes:
Why do you think they behave like that, can you give me an example of that?
Do they behave the same way towards you outside school?
Do you have friends from other ethnic groups?
Do you go out socially with friends from other ethnic group?
What's the basis for your frienship with Black peers?
Is it the same for non-Black peers?
How about males/females in the school?

4. Tell me about discipline [consequences] in the school?

Probes:
Is it applied fairly to all groups of students?
Can you give me some examples?
Has the issue of discipline affected your studies and personal well-being in the school?

5. I want you to think back to when you made your course choices for high school. How did you decide which options to choose?

Probes:
Did you speak to teachers and counselors about the choices you made?
Do you feel you were channelled into a particular course level?
Do you feel all students were treated equitably in course choice?
So what would you say are the characteristics of a successful student

6. Can you tell me what you know about multi-cultural education?

Probes:
What do you think of social studies as a subject?
Does it reflect your ethnic group?
Is it important that it reflects your ethnic group?
Does it help you in your relationship with other ethnic groups?
What about other subjects?

APPENDIX C: Letter of Participation

Department of Educational Foundations
Faculty of Education
5-109 Educational Building North.
Tel: 492-3726.

22nd March 1994.

Dear Student Participant,

You have been selected to participate in a University of Alberta study investigating the schooling experiences of African Canadian students. I hope that the findings will help us to understand how you experience school. The information will be used as part of my Masters of Education thesis, but it will also be useful to administrators who make policies that affect your school life.

As part of the study I will require you to answer a questionnaire to give me background information on yourself and your school life. I will also be asking you to get together with other African Canadian students to talk about your experiences of schooling. The group discussions should last about 1 hour each and we will meet about three times over the period of April to May 1994.

I am really interested in finding out what a student like yourself thinks about school life. This includes the impressions you have of yourself, teachers, fellow students, and the curriculum. I will be using an audio tape to record our conversations. All this information will help me to get a clearer idea of what African Canadian students think of their schooling experiences.

If you do decide to help me by participating in my research then I will only use your "research name" to record/identify what you say, and no one else will have access to any recordings.
There are no physical or psychological risks involved in the project, and since your participation is voluntary, you may withdraw your help at anytime during the research.

Thanks for taking the time to read this letter. I would really appreciate your help with my research. Please sign below if you are willing to take part in the research.

Jenny Spencer

I agree to take part in the research project being carried out by Jennifer Spencer as part of her Masters thesis at the University of Alberta.

Signed------------------------- Date-------